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Canaan ruins found near Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The entrance to a royal palace and other structures indicating the importance of a city from the Canaan period have been uncovered at Tel Yarmouth, southwest of Jerusalem, a team of Israeli and French archaeologists said Friday. The archaeologists said they also discovered a bronze plaque with royal Egyptian hieroglyphics dating back to 2000 BC. The excavation over the last several years has also unearthed a 6,000 square metre palace, large fortifications and a seven-metre-high entrance. Abandoned around 2300 BC, the site was reoccupied a thousand years later and it is mentioned in the Bible as one of the primary cities in the Canaan period.



Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية والرأي

King receives Saudi message

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Thursday received a message from King Fahd of Saudi Arabia in reply to the King's message to King Fahd upon departure from Saudi Arabia earlier in the week. King Fahd described his meeting with King Hussein as a clear signal for the deep relations between Jordan and Saudi Arabia. King Fahd wished King Hussein good health and a happy life and the Jordanian people further progress and development. In another development, families of Jordanian political prisoners in Syrian jails have sent a message to His Majesty King Hussein calling for continued efforts to secure release of all Jordanian prisoners abroad. The families voiced support for the King's efforts to foster and enhance human rights and democratic freedom in the Kingdom and the region as a whole.

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Price: Jordan 150 Fils

Tense calm in south after riots related to increase in bread and fodder prices

Violence flares after Friday prayers in Karak before spreading; rioters clash with security forces, attack government and private property

Stranded tourists moved away after ordeal

From Ayman Al Safadi
In Karak

TENSE CALM returned to Karak and other southern towns late Friday after angry rioters protesting the increase in the price of bread battled with security forces, burned down government buildings and private banks and torched vehicles. Security forces were on high alert in the southern towns of Ma'an, Tafleh, Al Qaser, Al Mazar and Al Rabbah as well as Karak, where the violence erupted after Friday prayers at the town's main Omari Mosque. Karak residents said the violence began when police tried to stop a group of 200-300 people who staged a march and shouted slogans demanding the downfall of the government of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti for its decision to double the price of bread and animal feed. They said police used tear-gas, rubber bullets and fired live bullets in the air to disperse the protesters, who in turn pelted policemen with stones and set fire to several buildings, among them a branch of the Civil Consumers Corporation and the Arab Bank and torched government and private cars. Eyewitnesses said the riots spread to the cities of Ma'an, Tafleh, Al Qaser, Al Mazar and Al Rabbah late in the evening after tense calm returned to Karak. There were reports that a child died from asphyxiation and 13 people were wounded in the riots but it was not possible to confirm these reports from independent sources. His Majesty King Hussein said in an address to the nation that there were no casualties among the protesters and the only minor injuries were suffered by members of the security forces. A number of Karak residents who took part in the clashes told the Jordan Times that violence began after police tried to stop the

demonstrators by using tear-gas. Confrontations escalated after that and demonstrators whose number was estimated at 2000 burned at least four banks, the Civil Consumers' Society and other government facilities. Eyewitnesses told the Jordan Times that the rioters raised slogans demanding the resignation of the Kabariti government and the reversal of the decision to lift subsidies and, later in the day, the release of detainees whose number Karak deputy Nazih Ammarin put at 30. Young men who were still in the streets, where tyres were burning early this morning, said the demonstrators insisted that police forces withdraw from the city in which power was cut till 7.00 p.m. before they would stop the riots. Residents said that Karak Governor Badriddin Al Wadian formed a committee of city dignitaries to negotiate with the rioters after violence died down for a while at about 4 p.m. But, they said, police fired teargas as the committee met with the people and violence flared-up again. But clashes stopped at about 8 p.m. when police withdrew from the streets which were hlocked by rocks and burning tyres. Some rioters were seen looting the Civil Consumers' Society and three cars which were put on fire by them were still burning in the streets in which no policemen could be seen between 8 p.m. Friday and 1 a.m. Saturday when they went back to the city's main streets and took positions there. Traffic lights at the entrance of Karak from Amman were also damaged but there were no police presence at the entrance which security forces blocked earlier in the day. Residents said the riots were spontaneous but pointed that leaflets inciting people to protest the hiking of bread prices were distributed on Thursday in

the city, whose population is known to be politically active and where various leftist, centrist and Islamic parties have strong following. Dr. Ammarin, who along with 22 other lawmakers had expressed total opposition to the lifting of subsidies and boycotted parliament sessions to protest the decision last week, blamed the violence on police whose "intense presence in the city," he said, provoked the people into confrontation with members of the security forces. "The city was transformed into a police barracks in an unnecessary show of force that provoked the people," Dr. Ammarin told the Jordan Times. Dr. Ammarin said he stopped his efforts to calm down the situation at the request of the governor after Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti "threatened me and told me point blank that I was not to interfere in security matters with the use of a severe language." Dr. Ammarin said Mr. Kabariti's call came when he was negotiating the rioters' demands with the governor. He said he had told the rioters that he would speak on their behalf the issues of subsidies and detainees but he would not address their other demands for the release of Islamist activist Leith Shbeilat who is spending a prison term for lese majeste and the demand for the downfall of the government. City residents shared Dr. Ammarin's assessment of the situation as "very tense" in the city, which, residents say, will explode again if detainees are not released and if the police do not leave. Young men standing at the corners of the city streets said the riots would erupt again if the detainees were not freed and if police returned to the city. About 100 tourists of various nationalities were stranded in Karak for a few hours before they were

evacuated from Karak rest-house out of the city under police escort. One tourist, Martina Sabra, who got held up with her husband and their 10-week-old daughter, said that one police officer advised her not to go further south on Saturday morning. In Amman, Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Lawzi condemned "irresponsible acts in parts of the country" and urged dialogue and democratic means as the only way to address issues of concern. Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Sa'd Hayel Shour expressed regret over the riots in Karak and echoed Mr. Lawzi in stressing dialogue as the best means of dealing with issues of contention. He said nobody would benefit from destroying public property and called for "controlling any behaviour that could damage our achievements." Former Prime Minister Taher Al Masri blamed the government for the riots and strongly criticised the police's handling of the rioters. "What is happening is very dangerous and its consequences are dangerous," Mr. Masri said. "We warned against the consequences of this but all our warnings fell on deaf ears. We have to take a very responsible stand to prevent all the repercussions." The Lower House of parliament member said he will talk with his colleagues in the House and that they "should come up with a stand that expresses its independence and representation of the people." A Ma'an resident told the Jordan Times by telephone that riots broke at the city centre at around 10:30 in the evening. He said that with the Housing and Islamic banks and a local store were in fire and that when he called civil defence they told him they could not get to downtown to put the fires off.

King cites foreign role in riots, warns against any bid to undermine Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Friday has accused "misled and misleading elements that belong to outside parties and powers" of being behind the riots that broke yesterday afternoon in some towns in the south and warned that the authorities "would strike with an iron fist" against those who would foment unrest. In a television address he will deliver to the nation this morning the King said: "Let us put an end to this black page that we lived on Friday and let those who were responsible bear the responsibility and the punishment for what they did." A copy of the speech was made available to newspapers through the official news agency, Petra. The King said, "however, that strict orders have been given to all security forces in the police and army to exercise maximum restraint in their reaction to the rioters. "No injuries have happened except among those who are ever vigilant to defend the homeland and protect the people," he said. The King absolved the Islamic Action Front from any responsibility for the riots. "With absolute clarity (let me say) that the elements (behind the riots) have in no way or form any link to the Islamic Action Front," he said. Following is the full text of the King's address: My dear brothers the citizens,



Your country now needs you all, needs you awareness, determination and solidarity to be able to bury sedition. Instructions were issued to all security and Armed Forces personnel to exercise self-restraint, and these instructions were implemented to the letter. No injuries took place, except among those who protect the land and the honour as well as the right of every citizen to live in security and peace. These injuries were, thank God, light. But instructions were issued in precaution and in preparation for these unexpected, unconstitutional and unpatriotic surprises. Jordan is the wall supporting Palestine and its people in their pursuit to regain their rights on their national soil. Jordan is in the most vital position in the body of its nation. And, I repeat, that is why the instructions were issued out of precaution to strike with an iron fist on the hand of every disobedient, everyone who challenges security and everyone who plants sedition. That is truly our right as it is our duty as a whole, as people, government and King who is the supreme commander of the Armed Forces. So let what happened thus far be the end of this black page which we witnessed today. Every one of us will shoulder the responsibility of what he committed against his country and will be, God willing, punished. This country, for which I lived amongst those proud people and those whose heads do not bend except for God the Almighty, will remain strong in the face of all storms and hard in the face of all evil powers. I will always remain keen on protecting the interest of the country, its citizens as individuals and as groups, until the day I meet my Creator with my book in my right hand. Peace be upon you

Dear citizens, As I talk to you in the frank manner that I always used, I who turned 60 who served amongst you for 44 years, I tell you one by one:

your property — and other private property. In some areas, they started shooting at security men and citizens from some houses here and there. For clarity's sake, these elements do not belong in any form to the Islamic Action Front in this country.... In fact these misled and misleading elements are the remains of some who belong to parties operating outside Jordan in terms of ideology and belief. Many a time I have warned and drew attentions to my uneasiness over democracy in Jordan — which we always wanted to be an example to be followed by others, be they near or far — from its enemies who disguise themselves in it, and work to abort it and destroy all of the achievements of the country and its citizens over the past years.

They worked in several of the Kingdom's areas, burning and destroying some state property — which is

Royal Decree terminates Parliament's extraordinary session

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein on Friday ordered the immediate termination of the extraordinary session of Parliament that started on June 20. A Royal Decree carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the interruption of the session took immediate effect. Parliament will begin its regular annual session in October. Under the Constitution, the King could defer the beginning of the session up to 60 days. The decree ordering the termination of the extraordinary session was issued several

hours after riots broke out in southern Jordan, where protesters against the increase in bread prices clashed with security forces and attempted to destroy state and private property. The extraordinary session of Parliament was called to discuss pending legislation specified in the Royal Decree convening the session, but most of the legislature's discussions dealt with the government's move to lift subsidies and increase the price of bread and fodder as part of the Kingdom's economic restructuring programme. And the House was also hit this month by a boycott of 23 members from opposition groups

locked in a related dispute with the government. The government and Parliament could not see eye-to-eye on the proposed increases and on a mechanism of cash compensation to ensure that Jordanians are not affected negatively by the increase. The removal of direct subsidies for fodder led to hikes in the market prices of dairy products despite the cash compensations offered by the government, which cited direct smuggling and the use of subsidised fodder to fatten sheep intended for sales in neighbouring countries. The executive authority also said subsidised bread

was being smuggled and wasted in huge quantities and that the removal of direct subsidies was aimed at checking these practices. A special parliamentary committee drew up proposals which were rejected by the government, which said the proposals failed to serve the basic goal of removing subsidies. Officials also said the proposals actually meant additional spending over and above the present annual subsidies of JD 95 million at a time when the treasury was also facing an increased budget deficit. After it became clear following laborious discussions and meetings within and outside Parliament that

the legislative and executive authorities could not reach common ground, the government on Tuesday announced increases in the prices of bread and a cash compensation of at least JD 1.28 per month for every Jordanian. Excluded from the compensation are the nearly 400,000 foreign workers in the country and tourists. On Wednesday, the special parliamentary committee presented its own version of increased prices and cash compensation to Parliament, but the proposals, which effectively meant a renegotiation with the government over the issue, were turned down by the

House with a 23-29 vote, with 52 deputies attending the session. The group of 23 other deputies, mostly from the Islamic Action Front and leftist parties, including Karak Deputy Nazih Ammarin (see story above), stayed away from the session, maintaining a boycott they launched two weeks ago in protest against what they said was the failure of the state-run Jordan Television to air their full speeches in the House on the issue of subsidies. Several deputies criticised the group's boycott, pointing out that if the 23 deputies had attended Wednesday's session, the

committee proposals would have had enough support for endorsement. (Even if the House had adopted the proposals, it would not have any impact on the increases announced by the government, which said it was an administrative decision and prerogative of the executive authority under the Constitution. Samir Habashneh, chairman of the special committee, said meanwhile he was also determined to join the boycott of the sessions of the House (see page 3). During Wednesday's session, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti strongly criticised the group, which in turn issued a statement

accusing him of using unacceptable language and demanding his government's resignation. The termination of the extraordinary session meant that pending legislation, including a new law on the Jordan Press Association and an important agreement between the government and an American company on prospecting for oil, would have to await the regular annual session. It also means that Parliament members do not have immunity against arrest and prosecution since the Constitution states that such immunity is valid only when the legislature is in session.

Arafat faced assassination attempts, Abbas discloses

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — A Palestinian architect of peace deals with Israel said in a newspaper interview published on Friday that Palestinian President Yasser Arafat had faced several assassination attempts in recent weeks.

Mahmoud Abbas, known as Abu Mazen, also told the Israeli daily Yedioth Ahronoth that he viewed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu elected in May as "pragmatic" and "a strong leader."

Asked about leaks that there had been several attempts to assassinate Mr. Arafat in recent weeks, Mr. Abbas said: "That's correct. There were several attempts from organisations against peace, and from countries opposed to the agreement (with Israel)."

"But Arafat is a brave man. He took on himself the commitment to the agreement with Israel, and he is fulfilling his obligation. He and we with him, want to live in peace with you and safeguard the peace. However, the situation is very difficult," said Mr. Abbas.

Mr. Abbas gave no details of the assassination attempts, and there was no immediate confirmation of the report from Mr. Arafat's office.

Mr. Abbas was a key figure in the secret talks that led to the initial Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord, and he signed

the September 1993 agreement for the PLO in Washington. In May he was named general secretary of the PLO's Executive Committee, in effect making him Mr. Arafat's heir apparent.

Mr. Abbas, asked whether he could see Mr. Arafat giving up his quest for peace, said, "yes, certainly," the newspaper reported.

"If the government of Israel brings him to a dead end and he sees there is no way out, Arafat could certainly announce: 'I can't take it any more. I have nothing to offer my nation and I am not capable of bearing the responsibility which I took upon myself. I made peace, I worked for peace, but we have reached an impasse.'"

"I really hope that we won't reach that moment. I don't want to think about that moment," Mr. Abbas said.

Mr. Abbas called Mr. Arafat "the optimist of optimists."

"For many years, before we came here, he was the one who filled us with hope, and always knew how to spot the points of light and call for continued effort," he said.

"Even now, Mr. Arafat tells our people that though the situation is difficult and Israel says no and delays the implementation of the agreement, he insists that we must still hope and wait patiently."

Mr. Abbas said Mr. Arafat would not accept expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, Israel refusing to withdraw its

troops from most of Hebron as promised, or Israel refusing to negotiate on the future of Jerusalem.

The Palestinians want East Jerusalem, which Israel seized in the 1967 Mideast war, as capital of a future state. The Israel-PLO agreements call for the final status of the city to be determined in negotiations between the two sides, but Mr. Netanyahu has already said he will not negotiate on Jerusalem.

"If that is so, he does not intend to honour the agreement, and he is seeking to use force to impose a reality," Mr. Abbas told Yedioth Ahronoth.

Mr. Abbas said that if there is no negotiation on Jerusalem, there will be no peace between the two peoples.

Mr. Abbas said he was taking part in get-acquainted meetings in Tel Aviv nearly every day with representatives of Mr. Netanyahu, the right-wing Likud Party leader who opposes the land-for-peace policy of the government he ousted.

"We are getting ready for the possibility the negotiations will resume," Mr. Abbas said.

He said he expected that ultimately Mr. Netanyahu would agree to meet Mr. Arafat. Mr. Netanyahu has said he will meet the PLO chairman only when he deems it appropriate.



RELIEF FROM HEAT: Palestinian children frolic in a water fountain outside Jerusalem's Old City walls to get some relief from the midday temperatures which have averaged over 30 degrees all summer. The children play in the fountain as there are no public swimming pools in East Jerusalem (Reuters photo)

Greeks and Turks in festival

GOKCEADA, Turkey (R)

Ethnic Greeks on a small Turkish island celebrated an orthodox Christian festival in peace with Turks on Thursday but historical rivalries and the Cyprus issue remained a source of thinly-veiled friction.

Greeks sacrificed bulls blessed by orthodox church officials, danced to traditional songs and prayed in a small church in one of the island's Greek villages in a festival commemorating Dormition Day, known as assumption in Western Christian churches.

"We don't care about the problems with the Greeks and the Turks," said Mavrianos Grafiadellis, who represents Greeks who have migrated from the island to live in Thessaloniki, Greece.

About 2,000 ethnic Greeks born on the island, called Gokceada in Turkish and Imbros in Greek, came from all over the world for Dormition, which commemorates the Virgin Mary's rise to heaven.

The island's Turkish gendarmerie commander danced in the main square with the village headman and the leader of the island's Greek expatriates.

The crowd was reluctant to discuss the historical problems between Greeks and Turks, which flared up in Cyprus in recent days with the killing of two Greek Cypriots by people from the Turkish side of the divided island.

Residents of Gokceada, in the north Aegean Sea, distanced themselves from the problems between the two nations which escalated early in the year in a conflict over the deserted Aegean islet of Kardak, known as Imia to the Greeks.

Dozens killed in Libya clashes, opposition says

CAIRO (AFP) — Renewed fighting between two militant organisations and Libyan security forces has left scores dead, the two opposition groups said in a statement in an Arabic daily Friday.

The armed Jamaa Islamiyah and "the Movement of Islamic Martyrs" said in a statement in London-based Al Hayat that "the situation in the east of Libya has deteriorated severely" over the past weeks.

"Several battles have taken place between militants and the security forces causing dozens of deaths on both sides," according to the paper.

"The Movement of Islamic Martyrs said the Libyan security services had foiled an assassination attempt planned by its militants in Benghazi" against Libyan Defence Minister Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jaber, it added.

On Tuesday travellers arriving in Egypt from Libya said Libyan security forces backed by warplanes had clashed with Islamic fundamentalists in eastern Libya, and that such skirmishes had been taking place for more than a year.

"The security forces are

backed by MiG-23 and Sukhoi planes which have been bombing armed Islamist hideouts in the mountainous area between Dima and Jabal Lakhdar for the past week," one Libyan traveller said.

The armed Jamaa Islamiyah said in a statement signed by its leader, Abu Abdallah Sadek, that "five of its members, including the head of the Khaled Al Zentani cell of Tripoli and 16 security service troops had been killed in a seven-hour battle at Ain Marah near Derna in eastern Libya when one of its cells ambushed a security service battalion," the newspaper said.

Exiled Libyan opposition groups and travellers have reported several flare-ups in past months, most recently in mid-July when security forces crushed a mutiny in Bustin jail near Tripoli where political prisoners are held.

Ali Al Sherif, of the Libyan Human Rights League, said "clashes" between the authorities and armed Islamic fundamentalists "had left 600 dead and 780 wounded on both sides in the past year."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yemen wants to join GCC — president

SANAA (R) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh in remarks published on Thursday reiterated his country's interest in joining the oil-rich Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). "Yemen occupies a basic and important position in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf," he said in an interview with the Beirut-based Adwa Al Yemen magazine that was republished in Yemen's official daily Al Thawra. "The natural place of Yemen is to be among the brotherly countries of the council which is a matter up to the northerly leaders of the council," he added. The GCC is a military, political and economic alliance comprising Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman. Impoverished Yemen's ties with GCC states, especially Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, were damaged because of Sanaa's sympathy with Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Relations with Saudi Arabia have gradually improved since then, but strains persist with Kuwait. Yemeni officials have previously expressed an interest in joining the GCC.

Wife of Israeli spy jailed in U.S. ends fast

TEL AVIV (R) — The wife of convicted American Jewish spy Jonathan Pollard, jailed for spying for Israel, ended an 18-day hunger strike after meeting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday. Mr. Netanyahu's office said, "Mrs. Esther Pollard met the prime minister today and told him she had decided at his request to stop the hunger strike," a statement released by the office said. It said Mr. Netanyahu had pledged to work for Pollard's release from prison in the United States. Mrs. Pollard announced her fast in Jerusalem on July 28 saying she would take only water until the release of her husband, a former U.S. navy intelligence analyst jailed for life for passing secrets to Israel. A few days earlier, U.S. President Bill Clinton had denied clemency to Pollard, in jail since 1985.

Iran denies breaking Iraq sanctions

TEHRAN (R) — Iran has denied U.S. accusations it allowed ships carrying contraband Iraqi oil to transit Iranian Gulf waters, saying the American navy took bribes to let some ships through, a newspaper said on Thursday. The daily Salam carried an Iranian navy statement denying the charges raised at the U.N. Security Council last week and quoting unnamed ship captains as saying they "could pay a bribe and pass American ships without being stopped and inspected." The statement said the Iranian navy had inspected thousands of ships while enforcing United Nations sanctions against Iraq and stopped hundreds of violators. "But the American navy does not stop (many) ships because of secret deals with multi-national corporations," added the statement issued by Iran's main navy headquarters on the Gulf. The Iranian statement came in response to a letter by U.S. Deputy U.N. Representative Edward Gnehm which alleged that the multinational interception force which enforces sanctions had observed that Iran was allowing ships with contraband oil to enter Iranian waters for "a standard fee" to evade inspections. Iran has criticised the United States military presence in the Gulf region and this month accused U.S. fighter planes of violating Iranian airspace. A U.S. official denied the charge. A British navy commander has said that the violations had decreased since Baghdad signed an oil-for-food deal with the United Nations in May.

Bani-Sadr to testify in court on Iranian ties to Berlin murders

BERLIN (R) — Former Iranian President Abolhasan Bani-Sadr will testify in a German court this week about his allegations linking Tehran to the 1992 murder of three Kurdish opposition leaders in Berlin.

The Berlin court approved on Thursday a request by prosecutors trying five suspects for the gangland-style slayings that Mr. Bani-Sadr should spell out his assertions that two Iranian leaders knew of and approved the attack.

Reached at his exile home in France, Mr. Bani-Sadr confirmed he would repeat in court his charges that Iran's president and spiritual leader personally blessed the assassination three months in advance.

"Bani-Sadr will identify and confirm who was pulling the strings in Tehran," said Wolfgang Wieland, a lawyer representing families of the victims before the Berlin

court. Tehran has poured scorn on Mr. Bani-Sadr, who now lives near Paris and vehemently opposes Iran's Islamic government.

Mr. Bani-Sadr, 63, told prosecutors in June the assassination plan must have been approved personally by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's religious leader.

"The plan for killing the Kurds in the Mykonos restaurant was approved by the president and the religious leader of Iran around three months before the assassination," the prosecution has said in a court submission based on Mr. Bani-Sadr's statement.

"Without their agreement, carrying out the attack was just as unlikely as it would have been without massive support from the state, for example through passports, plane tickets, money, special

telephone numbers," it added.

An Iranian, Kazem Darabi, and four Lebanese... are accused of murdering the three leaders of the Iranian Democratic Party of Kurdistan (DPK) and their translator in Berlin's Mykonos restaurant in September 1992.

Lawyers questioned an Iranian engineer who is a witness for the defence in the German embassy in Tehran on Monday, the judge said, adding that transcripts of the interview were not yet available. A second scheduled witness did not appear.

Defence lawyers had tried for a year to win permission from Iran to let the witnesses testify. The high-profile case has strained German-Iranian relations, especially after prosecutors issued an arrest warrant in March against Iranian Intelligence Minister Ali Fallahian accusing him of masterminding the attack.

Denmark to probe torture in Turkey charge by Kurd

COPENHAGEN (Agencies) — Denmark said on Friday it would investigate allegations by a Kurd of Danish nationality that he was tortured while held in a Turkish prison for five weeks.

"On the basis of our investigation, we will consider what steps if necessary to take against the Turkish government," Foreign Minister Niels Helveg Petersen told reporters.

He added that Denmark might also take the matter up in the European Union (EU).

Kemal Koc, a naturalised Dane, was arrested and jailed by Turkish authorities in Ankara on July 9 while attending his brother's funeral and charged with giving economic assistance to

the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) from Denmark.

PKK guerrillas have been fighting the Turkish army for independence or autonomy in south-east Turkey since 1984.

An Ankara court on Thursday ordered Mr. Koc freed pending trial in September but he was expected to be deported to Denmark on Friday, the Danish embassy in Ankara said.

"I have been treated atrociously in prison. Turkey is a military dictatorship," Mr. Koc told Danish reporters in the court.

Throughout the hearing he repeatedly said he was an innocent member of a Kurdish cultural organisation in Denmark and that a confession he

made to Turkish police was signed after torture.

Turkey protested to Denmark in March over the holding of a session of the Brussels-based Kurdish parliament in exile in the Danish legislature.

The vast majority of Denmark's large Turkish immigrant population are Kurds.

On Thursday the Danish chief delegate at the Council of Europe, Henning Gjellerod, said he would request a debate on continuing violations of human rights in Turkey.

In July, Denmark rejected a request from Turkey to close the Copenhagen office of the Kurdish organisation Erak, the political wing of the PKK.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:05Cartoon—Moomin
15:30Pumpkin Patch
15:45Drama—Blue Heelers
16:30Comedy—Big Brother Jake
17:00Sciences Cartoon
17:15La Vie Devant Moi
17:30Pyramid
18:00Chateau Vallon
19:00Le Journal
19:15Faut Pas Rever
19:30News Headlines
19:35 Comedy—The Torkelsons
20:00The Album Show
20:45Drama—Miami Vice
21:10Prism
22:00News in English
22:25 The Bold and the Beautiful
23:15 Feature Film "The Color Purple"

PRAYER TIMES

04:32Fajr
05:56(Sunrise) Duha
12:40Dhuhr
16:19Asr
19:24Maghreb
20:48Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweilich, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661656
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622566
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Anglican Church Tel. 652826

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775361

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 652526

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking

Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Hot weather conditions will prevail with temperatures 3-5 degrees centigrade above average and winds northwesterly moderate to active. On Monday, temperatures are expected to drop becoming normal. In Agaba, it will be hot, temperatures northerly moderate to active, and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 23/35

Agaba 27/40

Deserts 20/40

Jordan Valley 27/40

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 34, Agaba 39 Humidity readings: Amman 34 per cent, Agaba 32 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Mulhies Mazharab 830425

Dr. Wisam Hazyria 748563

Dr. Abdul Hadi Tryim 630115

Dr. Munther Al Qraini 779999

Firas pharmacy 661912

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asena pharmacy 637055

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ahmad Qano 281484

Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Ziyad Jghaitim 992991

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 996390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (direct assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Russell Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6

Alkileh Maternity, J. Amn 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 66727/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Abil, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajir 77101/2

AF-Bashir, J. Ashrafah 775111/26

Army, Marka 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikam Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)775555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275

Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

QAQA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel.

(08)53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights is obtained on telephone (08) 52700 or (08) 523250.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

08:00Damascus (RJ)

10:20Beirut (RJ)

10:30Karachi, Dubai (RJ)

10:30New Delhi (RJ)

11:00Abu Dhabi, Doha (RJ)

11:00Colombo (RJ)

15:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

17:20Cairo (RJ)

King chairs meeting of reform, modernisation commission

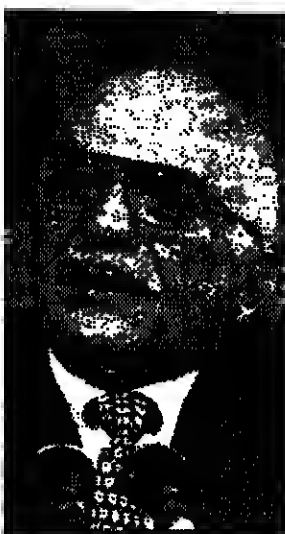
AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Thursday chaired a meeting of the Royal Commission for Modernisation and Reform to review the commission's progress as well as its achievements to develop and modernise the Jordanian public administration system.

Discussion at the meeting, held at Raghadan Palace and attended by HRH Crown Prince Hassan, covered legislation for promoting investments, stimulating the work of the Jordanian Economic and Social Organisation for

Retired Servicemen (JESORS), as well as issues pertaining to the Lands Fund, which deals with protecting state-owned land and the utilisation of this land for public interest.

King Hussein expressed his satisfaction with the commission's work and thanked Prince Hassan and other commission members for their efforts.

The meeting was also attended by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and Chief of the Royal Court Awn Khasawneh.



New director appointed to Queen's office

AMMAN (J.T.) — The director of the Prime Minister's office Salim Kheir has been transferred to the Royal Court to serve as director of Her Majesty Queen Noor's office.

Mr. Ibrahim Nahalsi who was serving as director of the Foreign Ministry was transferred to the Prime Ministry to serve as director of the Prime Minister's

office, succeeding Mr. Kheir.

New chief justices appointed

A report in the daily Al Ra'i states that Judge Naji Tarawneh is slated to be appointed Chief Justice of the Court of Cassation while Judge Omar Ahaza will be heading the Higher

Court of Justice succeeding Judge Khleif Suheimat who is currently serving as principal of both courts and has requested to be retired.

Judge Suheimat became Supreme Court Chief Justice after the resignation of Judge Rifaat Shamout in October 1994 and later was appointed to head the Court of Cassation succeeding Judge Ali Naasan.

Habashneh declares boycott of Parliament sessions

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Parliament Deputy Samir Habashneh has stated his resolve to boycott further parliament sessions in protest of its handling of alternate committee recommendations which offered alternative measures to the government-sanctioned removal of the bread and animal feed subsidies.

He told Al Ra'i daily that his boycott was neither in support of nor in connection to the 23-member group which has staged its own boycott this past week.

These had offered options to the price hikes such as a more gradual increase of bread prices with only those receiving National Aid to qualify for the government's suggested monthly compensation.

Those and other proffered alternatives were rejected in

Wednesday's parliamentary session.

The Lower House of Parliament Wednesday failed to pass a motion undercutting the government's decision to almost double bread prices, through a subsidies elimination, as part of an economic restructuring programme.

Despite the absence of these 23 dissenters, 52 deputies were present at the meeting which came out in favour of the government plans.

Mr. Habashneh, who chaired the special parliament committee which presented alternatives to the government strategy, is also the chairman of Parliament's Finance and Economy Committee.

With his absence, the total number of deputies boycotting the parliament sessions is 24.

Parliamentary sources told

Al Ra'i that other deputies have hinted at joining Mr. Habashneh's boycott.

Meanwhile, the Lower House of Parliament announced Friday that it will hold a session on Sunday to review both an agreement on oil prospecting signed by the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) along with the American oil firm Trans-Global and a draft amendment to the civil pension law.

The House is also scheduled to discuss other committee decisions concerning education, culture and youth connected with the country's 1994 Higher Education Law along with other assorted topics.

It remains to be seen whether or not the necessary amount of deputies will attend that a quorum may convene.

Theft of 4000-year-old mummy foiled by police

AMMAN (Petra) — Acting on a tip-off, police foiled a bid to sell the mummified remains of a 4000-year old male for JD 200,000, seized the mummy and detained suspects involved.

The preserved corpse was being stored in a coffin after having been unearthed at Rabbeh, a town located near the southern city of Karak, according to a police report which further stated that the body dates back to circa 2200 B.C.

An unnamed police agent posed as a potential buyer of the corpse yet alone failed to locate the mummy, however succeeding investigations led to its discovery and subsequent arrest of the alleged thieves.

Experts believe it to be the body of a 35 year old man, according to head of the

Department of Antiquities Ghazi Bisheh.

Bisheh said that initially the body was believed to be the first embalmed corpse discovered in Jordan (particularly as the city of Karak had been subject to Egyptian rule from 3200 - 2200 B.C. but was shown, instead, to have naturally mummified in desert conditions.

A police report said that the local police department in the Rabbeh region last month received information that a group of people was trying to sell the mummy for JD 200,000 prompting them to send the undercover agent to acquire further information as to the whereabouts of the alleged cadaver.

Although initially unsuccessful, subsequent investi-

gations pinpointed the house where the mummy was secreted and led to the subsequent arrests of a number of people, the police report stated.

The Department of Antiquities said it was able to determine the date of the mummy's demise from the hair on its head and chin.

According to the Archaeology and Anthropology Departments of Yarmouk University, which analysed samples taken from the mummy, it is the body of a male who died a natural death and that no chemical substances were used in the mummification process.

The mummy is the first of its kind to be found in Jordan and is now being held at Yarmouk University for further analysis and research purposes.

Filipina's death in Jordan was not 'murder'

By Alia Toukan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Reports in Manila tabloid and opposition newspapers that murder played a part in the death of a Filipina domestic helper in Jordan last month are totally fabricated as investigations carried out by the Jordanian authorities have proved otherwise, the Philippines Honorary Consul in Jordan said Friday.

According to the Consul Shafiq Jumean, Philippines President Fidel Ramos has communicated his satisfaction with the investigations carried out in Amman.

Mr. Jumean denied any reports of tensions between Manila and Amman over the death, saying that President Ramos was "con-

vinced of the thoroughness of the Jordanian investigations and their findings," adding that there has not been a single case of abuse against a Filipina maid since the three years he has been consul.

Jordanian police authorities have found that the death of the Filipina domestic helper, 26-year-old Eliza Salem, was an accident as the victim died after a fall resulting from her attempt to climb down an electric cable from the third-floor apartment of her employer, said Mr. Jumean.

Mr. Jumean told the Jordan Times last week that Ms. Salem was attempting to run away as she fell to her death.

In a note she left behind, a copy of which was made

available to the Jordan Times, Ms. Salem appeared to justify the need for running away by saying: "I cannot suffer to stay here and I do not want to go (to) Saudi (Arabia) because I am very afraid that what (madam) do (to) me here and in Cairo, she (will) do in Saudi (Arabia). All the part of my body I feel painful and I feel very afraid that she is coming now."

Ms. Salem was employed by a Jordanian medical doctor, along with his Egyptian born wife, who works in Saudi Arabia.

Ms. Salem was reportedly locked in the Shmeisani apartment for more than a week in July to "clean and prepare" ahead of her employers' return to Amman from Saudi Ara-

bia. The keys to the apartment were kept with a friend of the employers. The friend who locked Ms. Salem in said he did so upon the couple's request, so that "valuables are not stolen." He spoke to the Jordan Times last week, on condition of anonymity.

According to various sources, upon discovering that her employers would be returning soon, Ms. Salem attempted to run away on July 27.

She was found unconscious in the garden by the apartment caretaker at about 6.00 a.m. on that day and was taken by the police to Shmeisani Hospital where she passed away five hours later from extreme "haemorrhaging," according to hospital and autopsy reports.

Ms. Salem's death has received great publicity in the Philippines as another Filipina maid, Sarah Balabagan, was recently granted a reprieve from a death sentence in the United Arab Emirates where she was convicted of killing her employer who attempted to rape her.

Samir Al Hantoud, director of the Consular department at the Foreign Ministry was quoted as telling a Jordanian weekly that "there has not been a crisis between the Philippines and Jordan...as some Jordanians have been killed in the Philippines and a crisis did not occur."

Roughly 6,000 Filipinos work as domestic helpers in Jordan.

Concerns raised over possible downtown demolition

AMMAN (J.T.) — The owners of nearly 90 stores located around the Al Hussein Grand Mosque, the largest mosque in downtown Amman, have demonstrated concern to the Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abbadi over reported plans that his ministry, in conjunction with Amman Municipality, will dismantle stores in the course of a general programme to improve the vicinity around the mosque to protect archaeological sites found in the zone.

The merchants in question, led by the Amman Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce Haidar Murad, voiced their concerns in a meeting with Dr. Abbadi who, Mr. Murad said, denied that the ministry had any concrete plans in this respect, and further assured them that any moves in this direction would be taken in conjunction with the local merchants affected and the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

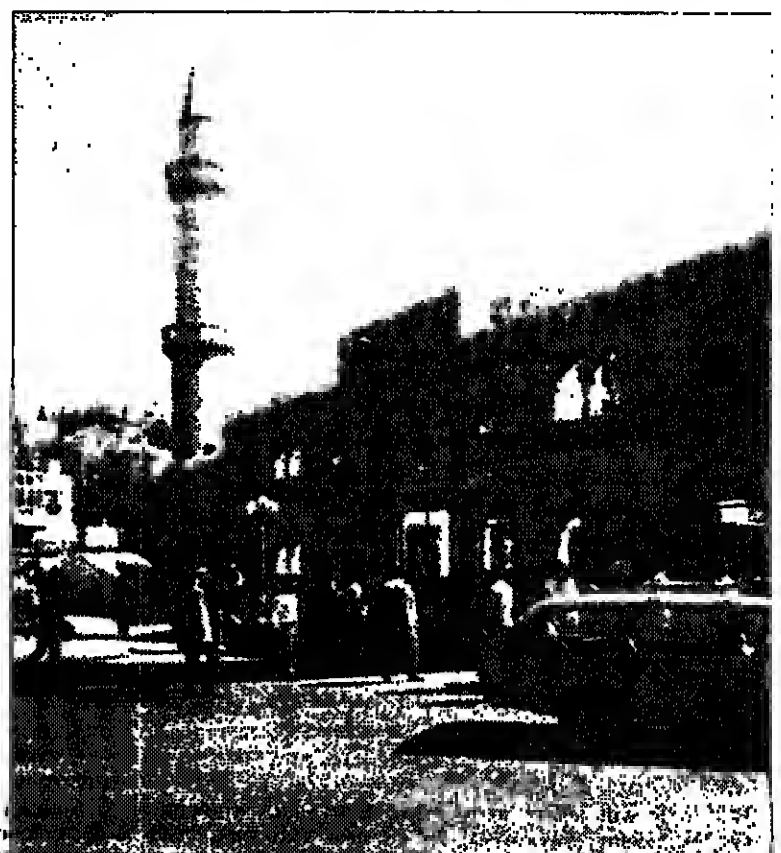
Mr. Murad quoted the minister as saying that while it was true that the ministry has contemplated the idea of general improvements in the area around the mosque, which is considered a municipal historical monument, to date no designs nor preliminary studies have been instigated by the min-

istry concerning the possible demolition of neighbouring buildings.

Mr. Murad told the Jordan Times Friday that proprietors and merchants around the mosque have expressed anxiety about these reported plans and that he duly conveyed their concern to Dr. Abbadi, stressing that these stores and buildings represent the principal source of income for many.

According to Mr. Murad, the two sides agreed to set up a committee comprising the merchants, the ministry and the municipality to discuss the protection of these archaeological sites with those authorities concerned, and to coordinate steps with them regarding compensation such that the interests of the retailers will be protected should any change take place.

Mr. Murad added that should such a scheme be effected more than 90 stores will have to be torn down but added that in such a case the ministry has pledged fair compensation, including the possible relocation of those affected to other stores in the downtown area. The merchants have now formed a liaison committee, chaired by Samih Khoul, to maintain contact with the ministry concerning the situation, said Mr. Murad.



Potential plans to improve the vicinity of Al Hussein Mosque in downtown Amman through store demolition have raised concerns among storekeepers (file photo)

Final electricity draft agreement endorsed

AMMAN (Petra) — A committee of technicians from Jordan, along with four other Middle Eastern countries, have endorsed a final draft agreement which facilitates a linking of electric power grids in their respective countries, an electricity tariff agreement and electrical power exchanges.

Mohammad Azzam, chief engineer of the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA), and Jordan's representative at the meeting held in Damascus this last week, said Friday that the draft agreement will be submitted to those countries concerned for their approval, namely Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Turkey, and Jordan.

A formal agreement is expected to be signed by the national electricity institutions' directors along with their respective ministers during a meeting to be held the second week of November in Damascus, said Mr. Azzam, acting as the committee's rapporteur.

The technical committee has agreed to proceed with

a feasibility study dealing with the construction of a centre to monitor and coordinate electricity exchanges among the five countries. Mr. Azzam stated that he was assigned the task of following up on this matter.

According to Mr. Azzam, the preliminary work regarding the implementation of the power linkage project was proceeding satisfactorily.

He added that the committee had appointed a sub-committee which will supervise the management and operation of the network once completed.

The dates of the anticipated linkage are as follows: between Jordan and Egypt, in current implementation, by the end of 1997; between Jordan and Syria, the first half of 1998; Syria and Turkey, the end of 1997; Iraq and Syria, in 1998, and Iraq and Turkey in the year 2002, he confirmed.

The regional project is being financed by the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.

Suspect in murder of physician apprehended

AMMAN (J.T.) — Police have arrested a 24-year old man in connection with the murder of Iman Yassin, a 26-year old physician who worked for the Islamic Hospital in Amman.

The victim, who was in her flat at the Fardous Housing Estate in the Tlaa Al Ali district in Amman when her assailant, identified in the report only as A. F., sneaked into the flat and attempted to sexually assault the woman, a police report said.

A struggle ensued in which her head hit the heating radiator and caused her death, continued the report. The assailant was working in building maintenance.

The woman's body was

discovered when she failed to show up at work for two days prompting hospital management to telephone her home; upon receiving no answer the management called the building caretaker who, with the aid of local residents, forced the door open, the report said.

Finding the woman's body with an wounded head and several facial injuries the police were immediately alerted.

The maintenance worker fell under suspicion when scratches to his neck and various wounds were spotted by the police as possibly resulting from some sort of altercation, continuing the report.

After repeated interrogations the man confessed to

the crime, the police said.

The police report went on to say that the man admitted to watching his victim for some time before managing to obtain the key to the flat above hers which was vacant at the time and that he was able to climb down on the pipes to enter Dr. Yassin's flat at four a.m.

In a re-enactment of the crime, the accused admitted that he attempted to rape the woman but was impeded by her struggle and that he covered her mouth to muffle her screams and that it was then that she struck her head against the radiator and fell unconscious.

He stated that he went out in the same manner that he had entered.

Irregularities found in JMA Pension Fund

By Odeh Odeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A recently released report by a committee named to inspect the Jordan Medical Association (JMA) Pension and Social Security Fund declared that inefficient financial management, failure to abide by accounting rules, corruption, speculation and abuse of funds were responsible for the large financial losses the JMA's fund suffered during 1994 and '95.

The report blamed these excesses on lack of efficient control and supervision systems, as well as ineffective internal auditing measures. According to Dr. Mahdi

Abdu Dahab, chairman of the seven-member committee, the JMA's Pension and Social Security Fund sustained a loss of JD 1,300,000 in 1994 and JD 2,200 in 1995 as a result of faulty investments. Dr. Abu Dahab said, in a statement to the Jordan Times, that the report indicated abuses of funds, non-adherence to recognised accounting rules and lack of an internal audit by the fund's financial management.

The report which covers the fund's activities from 1989 through 1994 stated that losses recorded in the company's securities portfolio at the end of 1994 were estimated at JD 7,400,000, or 59 per cent of the

fund's total assets which amounted to JD 12,500,000.

In 1995, losses totalled JD2,200,000, Dr. Abu Dahab said. An accounting review of the fund's records has documented evidence of embezzlement, noting that records of the revenues and expenses for West Bank physicians indicated a gap of JD 37,270.

The report added that two cheques totalling JD 33,000 were issued to West Bank doctors on 20th July 1993 without a JMA's board confirmation, thus violating company regulations.

Dr. Abu Dahab maintained that the committee could not identify the actual reasons for the stock

market losses, blaming the lack of documentation and missing files for the investigative difficulties.

The fund lost JD 1,276,000 in 1994 as a result of faulty investments in nine companies.

The JMA board was called on to invest in well-established companies so as to avoid risk of future losses, and to refer the case to the Prosecutor-General that they might commence investigative procedures and take necessary legal actions.

The committee also called on the JMA board to work out a financial and administrative operational standard for the fund and to set up a committee responsible for supervision of future activities.

WHAT'S GOING ON

SEMINAR

* "The World Trade Organisation — A Free Economy in a Changing World" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* "A Summer Souvenir" exhibition by Jordan River Designs, Adil Centre, Shmeisani (Tel. 813081/2), until Aug. 25.

* Wrought-iron exhibition by Salim Bandak at Kan Zanan, until Aug. 21.

* Abstract (plastic) art by Jordanian artist Abeer Bawab at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Aug. 22.

* Abstract (plastic) art by Hana Barto entitled "Between Past and Present" at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Aug. 20.

* "Science for Health" exhibition at the British Council, until Aug. 17.

* Abstract (plastic) art by Hussein Da'seh and Nader Samarah on Jerusalem at the Orfati Art Gallery, Umm Utheina (Tel. 826932), until Aug. 20.

Chechenya peace hopes glimmer; commanders sound sceptical

GROZNY, Russia (Agencies) — Russian security chief Alexander Lebed and the Chechen rebel leader expressed optimism Friday about bringing peace to the breakaway region but senior commanders on both sides sounded more sceptical.

Gen. Lebed, President Boris Yeltsin's special envoy to Chechenya, said talks with rebel leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev Thursday in southern Chechenya had been "hopeful and constructive."

Mr. Yandarbiyev, quoted by Interfax News Agency, said the rebels were ready to meet Russia on the road to peace.

"Lebed's peacemaking efforts deserve strong praise and the Chechen side is ready to meet them along this road," Interfax quoted Mr. Yandarbiyev as saying after meeting Gen. Lebed.

"Lebed has every chance of bringing peace to Chechenya and to the whole north Caucasus."

Mr. Yeltsin's spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky told a news conference that the president was seeking the fastest possible end to the conflict in Chechenya and remained committed to doing so by peaceful means rather than violence.

"The main burden of responsibility and the search for the most effective ways to a peaceful solution of this crisis lie on the shoulders of the secretary of the Security Council," Mr. Yastrzhembsky said, referring to Gen. Lebed.

Mr. Yeltsin appointed

Gen. Lebed his personal envoy to Chechenya last Saturday and issued a decree Wednesday increasing the powers of the Security Council, an inner circle of Russian leaders.

Gen. Lebed is currently the secretary of the council chaired by Mr. Yeltsin.

Tens of thousands of people have died since Russia sent troops in December 1994 to subdue Chechenya's independence drive.

A Russian military source told Interfax that 265 Russian soldiers had been killed and more than 1,000 wounded in the last 10 days since Chechen rebels swept back into the capital Grozny in a raid which humiliated the Russian military.

But the source said it was impossible to estimate the exact number of casualties. Friday was relatively quiet in Grozny, with only the occasional bursts of gunfire. Much of the city remains in rebel hands.

Refugees have fled the city where buildings are without power and water and snipers are active in the streets.

In Moscow, General Stanislav Kavun, deputy commander of Russian Interior Ministry troops, was sceptical about peace talks bearing fruit.

"The situation in Grozny is not being defused despite the assurances of the warring sides," he told a news conference.

Gen. Kavun accused the rebels of violating agreements reached since Gen. Lebed launched a new

peace initiative last week-end. "The efforts taken by Interior Ministry troops and Defence Ministry units to defeat the enemy are now being nullified," he said.

"As a rule, the rebels do not adhere to agreements. Each day they increase their forces. Each day agreements are violated," he said, adding that eight Interior Ministry troops were killed Thursday night.

"How can you agree anything with these people?" On the rebel side, Field Commander Shamil Basayev, who led the raid on Grozny, told ITAR-TASS news agency that he did not believe peace would come to Chechenya in the near future but he said he would abide by decisions taken by separatist leaders.

"I am a staff officer and will obey the orders of the military command and the decisions of the political leadership of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria," Commander Basayev said, using the separatist name for Chechenya.

The rebels say they have no intention of giving the city up.

The two sides agreed Wednesday to stop shooting except in self-defence, although each has accused the other of violations.

Gen. Lebed said the two sides had agreed to set up a supervisory commission to ensure "strict observance of the ceasefire conditions" and a supervisory council, including security chiefs from the neighbouring north

Caucasus republics of Dagestan, Ingushetia and Kabardino-Balkaria.

Meanwhile Russian Interior Minister Anatoly Kulikov said Friday he had asked President Yeltsin in a message to decide whether to keep him in his post or not. ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

"In connection with the false accusations and insults addressed to me by the secretary of the Security Council (Lebed) I am sending a message to the president asking him to decide whether or not I will stay in my post," Mr. Kulikov said.

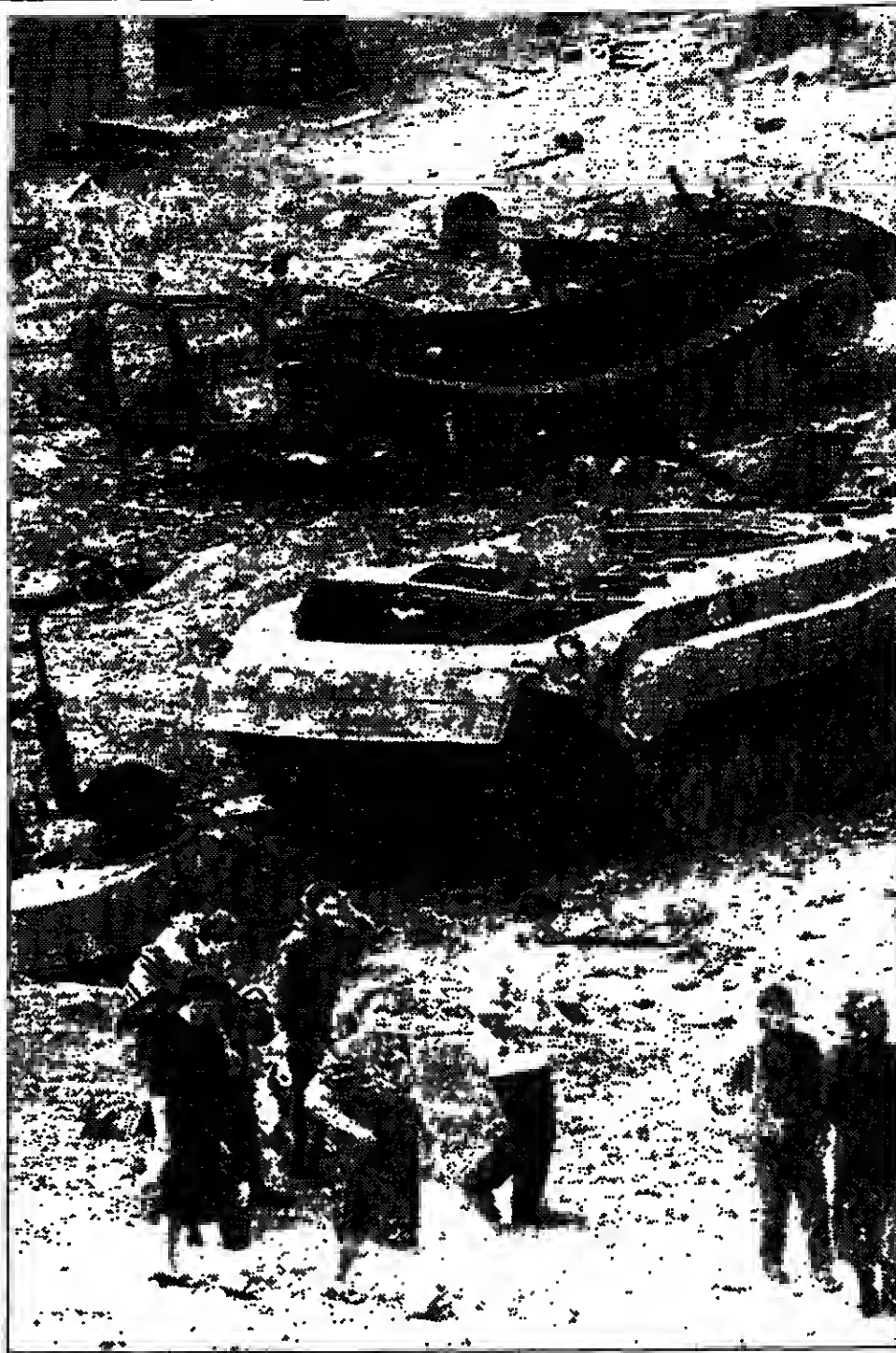
Earlier Mr. Kulikov told Interfax News Agency that he would tender his resignation if Gen. Lebed did not withdraw his allegations.

Gen. Lebed Friday called for the dismissal of Mr. Kulikov, accusing him of mishandling the Chechen crisis.

Gen. Lebed said Mr. Kulikov had "refused to fulfill his responsibilities" after Mr. Yeltsin had signed a decree on Dec. 29, 1995 instructing the interior minister to disarm the Chechen separatists.

Gen. Lebed cast Mr. Kulikov as "one of the main figures responsible for the tragedy in Chechenya."

Mr. Kulikov rejected the allegations, attributing them to "Lebed's insane striving for power and his insufficient knowledge of Chechenya's problems."



Residents of Grozny walk by destroyed Russian tanks in the Chechen capital of Grozny. The rebels seeking independence from Russia have controlled most of Grozny since Aug., when they swept into the city and captured key buildings (Reuters photo)

Home minister confirms plot against Bangladesh government

DHAKA (AFP) — The government Friday confirmed reports that three leaders of a 1975 coup who were arrested Tuesday were behind a plot to assassinate Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed.

Home Minister Rafiqul Islam told AFP that the three retired army officers were "vigorously interrogated" by security agencies and a hunt was on for other suspects behind what he termed a "conspiracy against the government."

"We have enough proof of some kind of conspiracy against the government, on the basis of which the three were arrested and rigorous efforts are on to arrest other plotters," Islam said.

Islam refused to give further details of the plot. The minister confirmed earlier press reports that the three had commissioned a suicide squad to assassinate Sheikh Hasina during her visit Thursday to lay a wreath at the grave of her father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladesh's founder

and first president who was assassinated in the 1975 coup.

The three, retired Colonels Faruq Rahman and Shabir Rashid and Major Khairuzzaman, were leaders of that coup that killed Rahman and 15 members of his family, toppling his Awami League government.

The League remained out of power until his daughter — who was in West Germany at the time of the killings — led the party to the government in June.

The three coup leaders were arrested at their homes in Dhaka Tuesday, two days before the first official National Day of Mourning commemorating the 21st anniversary of Rahman's death.

After Tuesday's arrest, the three were jailed on a 30-day detention order under the Special Powers Act.

Sheikh Hasina had declared Aug. 15 a "National Mourning Day" immediately after her Awami League party returned to power in

June elections, ending its two decades in the political wilderness.

Security sources said the conspiracy was unearthed in the "nick of time" and the plot was intended not only to disrupt the National Mourning Day but also to "eliminate important government figures."

Immediately after the arrests Tuesday, authorities tightened security around the prime minister and her family as well as cabinet members, they said.

Leaders of the coup have been given constitutional immunity from prosecution. But several people involved in the 1975 coup fled the country soon after the Awami League government was returned to power.

Sheikh Hasina has vowed to avenge her family's deaths. Her new government also sacked five former coup plotters who were working abroad in Bangladesh embassies and sent appeals to the countries involved not to give them asylum or shelter.

India opposes procedural gambit at nuclear talks

NEW DELHI (R) — India promised Friday to oppose any effort to send a global nuclear test ban treaty to the U.N. General Assembly, and diplomats warned New Delhi of possible fallout from its stance against the pact.

India, which earlier this week blocked the landmark pact in a negotiating committee in Geneva, signalled it would oppose any procedural attempts to send the treaty to the General Assembly, which meets in New York next month.

Indian officials said diplomats in Geneva were considering attaching the treaty text to a report that the ad hoc committee negotiating the ban would forward to the conference on disarmament, which oversees the negotiations.

The treaty could then be sent to the General Assembly in New York in time for its next session on Sept. 18.

"We will oppose this," an Indian government official

told Reuters. "We will not allow this to happen."

In a speech commemorating the start of the 50th year of India's independence Thursday, Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda strongly reaffirmed the government's opposition to the treaty.

India wants the accord to commit the five declared nuclear powers — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — to a timetable for dismantling their nuclear arsenals.

More specifically, New Delhi opposes a provision that would require it, along with the five nuclear powers and the two other "threshold" states, Israel and Pakistan, to ratify the treaty before it could become international law.

India exploded a nuclear device in 1974 but says it has not built the bomb. Experts believe both India and Pakistan could quickly assemble a nuclear bomb.

India's stance in Geneva

has been backed by all of the country's main political parties, and opinion polls show the public supports the government's position of protecting the option to eventually test and deploy nuclear weapons.

"A senior U.S. arms control negotiator was quoted as saying India could damage its influence by blocking the accord."

"I would think the impact of preventing action on something the world clearly wants would undercut the country's influence and credibility on these issues," John Holm, head of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, was quoted as saying by the Christian Science Monitor newspaper.

"What is under way is an assault on an institution," Mr. Holm said, referring to the conference on disarmament.

A diplomat in New Delhi said: "It is understandable that the world community

would look carefully at what India does and evaluate it. It is not a question of dollars and cents, but there might be a diminution of confidence in India."

But the Indian official said that "Indo-U.S. relations cover a wide spectrum. Just one issue cannot be a yardstick. We do not have to agree on everything."

Diplomats said India was being urged to consider the damage to the conference on disarmament if it failed after two years of talks to send an accord to the U.N. and a few treaty proponents bypassed the institution and sent it to the assembly.

"What happens if India loses an institution (conference on disarmament) which has done creative work towards its (Delhi's) goals?" a diplomat asked.

"There will be repercussions on India," he said. "There is no specific threat, but there is cause and effect."

Skeletons unearthed at old Soviet base in Germany

MAGDEBURG, Germany (R) — German builders dug up five skeletons Thursday near a former Soviet army base once used also for Soviet cold war counter-intelligence operations in eastern Germany, prosecutors said Thursday.

All five skulls had the front upper teeth missing, prosecutors' spokeswoman

Sylvia Niemann said. Five skeletons with teeth missing were unearthed nearby the previous day.

Ms. Niemann said they expected to dig up more remains. None had been identified and a request in the Russian authorities for information had failed to shed any light on the mystery.

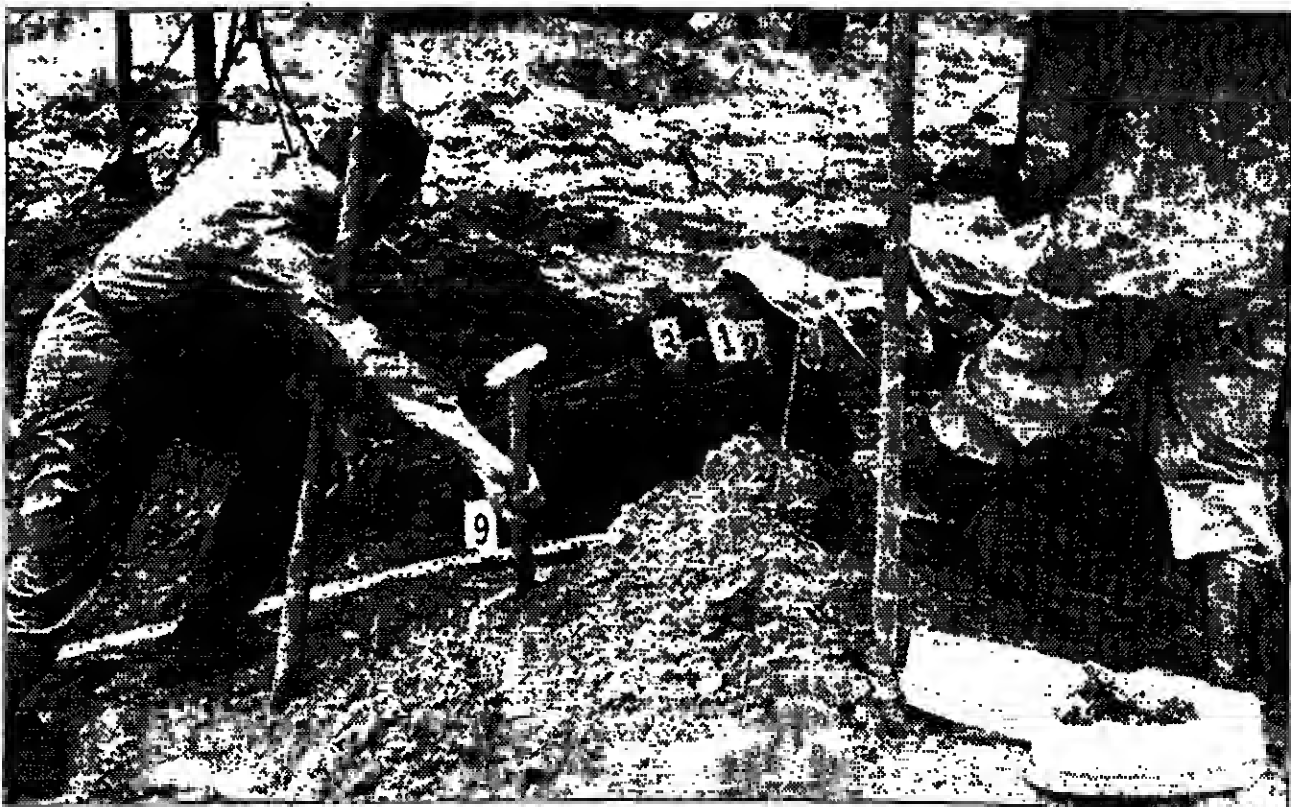
Forensic experts say the

teeth had been knocked out but were not sure whether this happened while the people were alive.

She said that investigators had established that the base officially used by Soviet military authorities had also been used by SMERSH — an arm of the Soviet counter-intelligence service, then the NKVD, deriving its

name from an acronym of the words "death to spies" in Russian.

In March 1994 builders found 32 skeletons with the upper front teeth missing near the former military base. Forensic experts said there had been no signs of unnatural causes of death and estimated they had been buried for 30 to 50 years.



Two German police specialists investigate skeletons found in the eastern German town of Magdeburg Thursday. German builders dug up five skeletons near a former Red Army base once used by the KGB for cold war counter-intelligence operations in eastern Germany (Reuters photo)

Cheaper haircuts for New Zealand men ruled out

WELLINGTON (R) — A New Zealand hairdresser made headlines after the Human Rights Commission cut her down for an advertisement offering cheaper haircuts for men. The commission deemed the offending sign advertising "pensioner special" haircuts of seven New Zealand dollars (\$5) for men and 15 New Zealand dollars for women was too hairy, and asked the hairdresser to remove it. Hairdresser Valerie Prater defended her advertisement. "Nine out of 10 male senior citizens have very little hair," she said. "My old men are bald-headed with just a fringe around the back. You can't charge them much, can you?" The commission said she could face further action if she did not remove the sign. A spokesman for the Human Rights Commission argued it was more than just a fringe offence, saying it was illegal to advertise a service discriminating on gender.

California police canine on the loose

LONG BEACH, California (R) — Police issued a warning that a vicious dog was on the loose. Unfortunately the escaped canine was one of their own. Officer Harry Erickson of the police department in Long Beach, south of Los Angeles, said their attack dog Dex had escaped from his handler's backyard. He said Dex was a black and tan German shepherd, weighing about 32 kilograms, but had no official identification on his collar. Mr. Erickson said the dog should not be approached because he is trained to attack.

U.S. workers struggle to save 900-pound man

NEW YORK (R) — Dozens of firefighters, police and emergency medical workers struggled for more than six hours to remove a man who weighed over 900 pounds from his apartment after he had difficulty breathing, officials said. Emergency workers had to knock out walls and bore them up to widen the staircase of apartment building to remove the man. Emergency Medical Services spokesman Capt. William Olsen said, Capt. Olsen did not release the man's identity. CBS Radio reported that he was a 42-year-old man who had not left his apartment in five years. A special cloth stretcher was used to carry him down the stairs from the third floor, Capt. Olsen said. Because the man could not fit in an ambulance a special utility company truck was waiting to take him to St. Luke's Hospital.

Diana wins injunction against photographer

LONDON (R) — Princess Diana won a high court injunction against a freelance photographer who overstepped the mark by trailing her everywhere on a motorbike. Martin Stenning, 36, was served with the injunction Thursday evening and is now banned from coming within 300 metres of the princess. He is also forbidden from communicating with her, harassing her or interfering with her safety, security or well-being. This is believed to be the first time the princess has taken out an injunction against a photographer. "My client has been compelled as a last resort to take legal action," lawyer Anthony Julius said. "She hopes that, as well as alleviating her own distress, this will highlight the destructive effect of persistent harassment on women's lives." According to various reports, Stenning repeatedly followed Princess Diana around on a motorbike to get photos.

South Korean students

South Korean students... (text is partially cut off)

South Korean students... (text is partially cut off)

South Korean students... (text is partially cut off)



South Korean students... (text is partially cut off)

Dole, buoyed by convention, hits campaign trail

SAN DIEGO (Agencies) — Newly crowned Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole hit the campaign trail Friday buoyed by a made-for-TV convention that unified his party and boosted his stock with voters.

Sen. Dole and his new vice-presidential running mate, former congressman and pro football quarterback Jack Kemp, hoped to capitalise on the political bounce generated by the tightly scripted convention during a four-state campaign swing starting in Colorado.

After attending a send-off rally on the San Diego waterfront Friday morning, the pair will also travel to Illinois, Pennsylvania and to a rally in Mr. Kemp's adopted hometown of Buffalo, where he played pro football.

The unanswered question was whether Sen. Dole's acceptance speech, in which he pledged to restore America to greatness, and his party's effort to show a more moderate face had convinced enough voters to take a second look at his underdog campaign.

"Let me be a bridge to a time of tranquility, faith and confidence in action. To those who say it was never so, that America has not been better, I say, you're wrong, and I know, because I was there. I have seen it. I remember," Sen. Dole said. Daily opinion polls showed Sen. Dole cutting President Bill Clinton's commanding lead, but he was still 11 points behind Mr. Clinton in an ABC tracking poll released Thursday and faced an uphill battle to catch up as Democrats prepared for



Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole gets a hug from wife Elizabeth after he delivered his nomination acceptance speech Thursday to the Republican National Convention (Reuters photo)

their own convention in Chicago.

"It's a tremendous beginning. We have the opportunity now to take this campaign to every city and town in every corner of America," said Republican Senator Connie Mack of Florida. Accepting the nomination he had sought for so long, the 73-year-old Dole tackled public concerns about his age head-on, presenting himself as a living link to a better past who could lead America back to that greatness.

At times Sen. Dole almost seemed to be declaring a generational war on the "baby boomers" of the Clinton administration — "a corps

of the elite who never grew up, never did anything real, never sacrificed, never suffered, and never learned."

Sen. Dole had faced a tough task in his speech, which was a crucial opportunity to make his case for winning the White House. He tried to inspire and reassure voters that he was not only worthy but able to take over the reins of power from Mr. Clinton in the Nov. 5 election.

Sen. Dole, whose laconic speaking style does not always come across well on television, worked on the address for weeks, playing with the text and practicing his delivery with a speech trainer.

"We're midwesterners like Bob Dole, and we believe you don't have to be a great orator to be a great leader. All you have to do is speak common sense. And that's what we heard tonight," Nebraska delegate Mike Teft said.

Emphasising an issue that will be at the forefront of his campaign, Sen. Dole argued that his sweeping proposal for a 15 per cent income tax cut would put money in the pockets of middle-class Americans. He promised to help small businesses, chop the Internal Revenue Service down to size and protect programmes for the old, the poor and the sick.

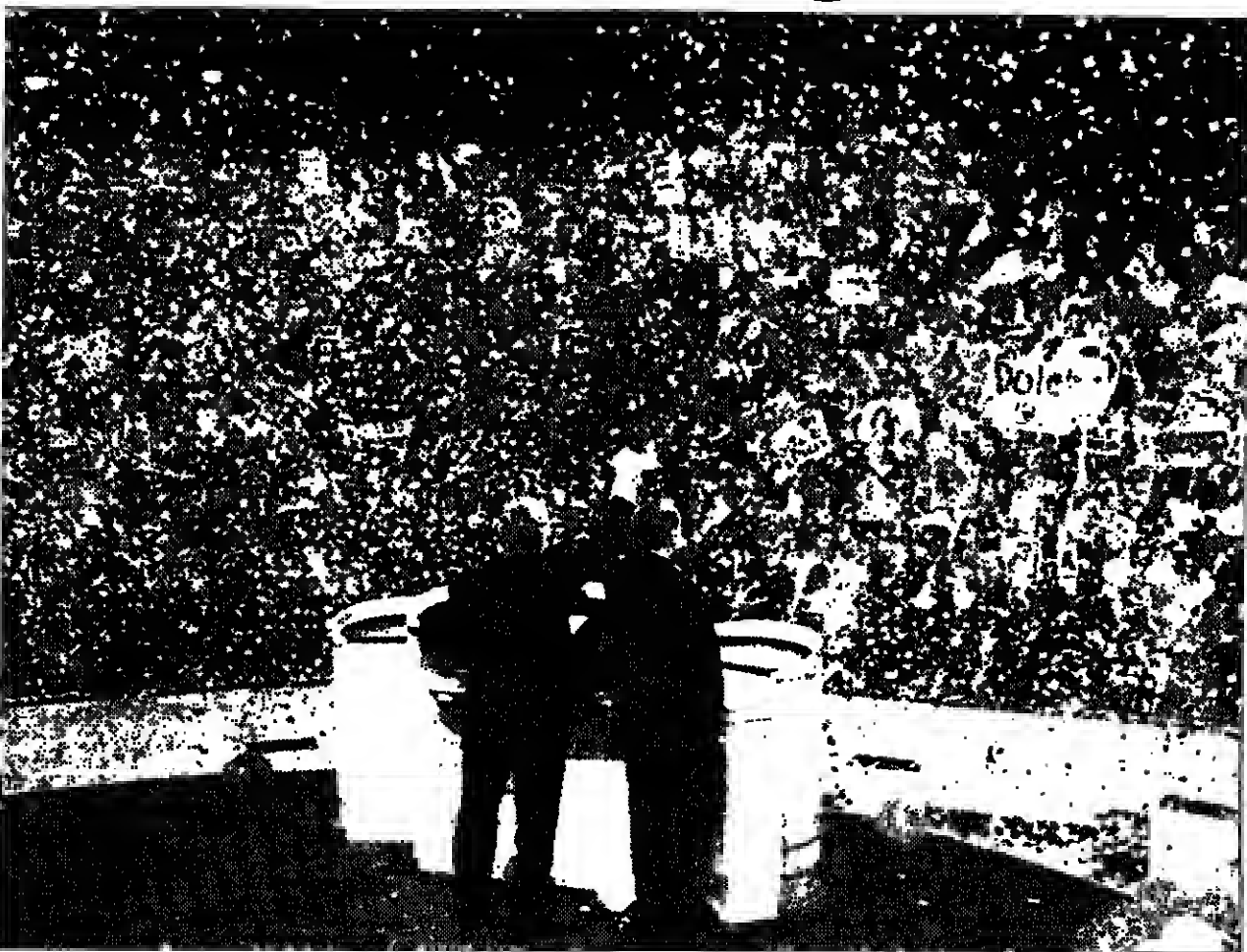
Despite recent indicators that the economy was performing well, Sen. Dole and Mr. Kemp argued that too many middle-class families were struggling.

The campaign, hoping to draw a contrast with voter doubts about Mr. Clinton's character, planned to play up Sen. Dole's background as a child of the depression who overcame horrific World War II wounds that left him permanently disabled.

Sen. Dole's unexpected selection of Mr. Kemp last week energised the campaign. Mr. Kemp is an ebullient campaigner who preaches a message of racial tolerance and economic growth that campaign officials hope will have broad appeal.

Sen. Dole wrapped up the four-day Republican National Convention with a call for unity to his party that has been divided over issues such as abortion and immigration.

He told the party faithful that now was the time to



Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole (right) and vice-presidential nominee Jack Kemp raise their arms as they celebrate following Sen. Dole's acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention in San Diego Thursday (Reuters photo)

rally behind his banner to defeat Mr. Clinton in the November elections, blaming the Democratic president for weakening America economically and militarily.

"I call for every American to rise above all that may divide us and to defend the unity of the nation for the honour of generations past and the sake of those to come," he said.

Delivering his keenly-awaited acceptance speech, Sen. Dole raised the Repub-

lican flag for "God, honour, family, duty and country."

He lashed out at Mr. Clinton for what he said are economic policies that have failed to revitalise the economy, have failed to combat crime and have weakened the military.

"I believe President Clinton has failed to adequately provide for our future defence," said Sen. Dole. "For whatever reason his neglect, it is irresponsible." Pundits believe the race

will tighten now that Sen. Dole has had this "bounce" in the polls and a new injection of \$62 million in campaign funds.

Sen. Dole also highlighted Mr. Clinton's lack of military service while noting his own World War II duties in Italy during which he suffered serious injuries. With this in mind, he promised over to commit U.S. troops "without the prospect of victory."

"And when I am president, our men and women in our armed forces will know the president is his commander in chief — not Boutros Ghali, or any other U.N. secretary general."

"Our allies demand consistency and resolve, which they deserve from us as we deserve the same from them. But even if they falter, we cannot, for history has made us the leader and we are obliged to history to keep the highest standard."

South Korean police storm Seoul university campus

SEOUL (AP) — South Korean police stormed a Seoul university Friday to break up about 3,600 students demonstrating at the campus, state television said.

About 20,000 riot policemen entered the Yonsei University campus at about 7:00 p.m. (1000 GMT) and began taking protesting students into custody, KBS TV said.

Television pictures showed police helicopters firing teargas at students, while other students on the roof of a building prepared for approaching policemen.

Police were not immediately available for comment. Earlier they said they would detain all the students who have been staging violent demonstrations for three consecutive days calling for reunification with Communist North Korea.

A police spokesman said earlier nine students had been formally charged with violence, eight were sent to summary courts, which can give jail sentences of up to 30 days, and another 381 were released after warnings.

The protesters earlier had tried to force their way through ranks of combat police who had cordoned off Yonsei University in western Seoul, the police spokesman said.

The protesters, wearing masks and bandkerchiefs over their faces to protect themselves from tear gas, tried to beat their way through police lines, using iron pipes, petrol bombs and stones.

Helmeted police with shields hurled teargas shells and charged the students, arresting dozens of them.

The protesters have said they will end their demonstrations if they are assured that they will not be detained, but police refused to let them go home.

"We will have to investigate all of them. They have violated laws and 40 policemen are in critical conditions in hospital after being attacked by them," the police spokesman said.

Police earlier said some 4,000 students still at Yonsei had set up barricades with tyres, desks and chairs along the main road on the campus, and around the science building the radicals used as a stronghold.

The police spokesman said more than 100 students had been detained during repeated clashes at Yonsei Friday. Another 300 or so were believed to have fled the campus later.

More than 700 others were being grilled for their roles in similar protests over the past two days.

The spokesman said nine

students had been formally charged with violence; eight sent to summary courts that give sentences of up to 30 days in jail and another 381 were released after warnings.

On Thursday, thousands of police, backed by 12 helicopters and several armoured vehicles, stormed the campus to break up 6,000 students attending a rally the government had outlawed.

The students, marking the 51st anniversary of the division, took shelter in university buildings when police chased them and repeatedly returned to gather on the university grounds for pitched battles.

Students prevented police from storming a science department building to arrest them by threatening to set off blasts with gas cylinders and chemicals. Police said at least 300 students and police were injured in the protests.

An aide to President Kim Young-Sam said the government was determined to crack down on campus violence, which "has reached a dangerous point endangering social order."

The Seoul government, which wants detente before discussing reunification with Pyongyang, said the students supported North Korean propaganda.



South Korean students throw firebombs at police against a backdrop of heavy teargas as they try to fight their way onto Yonsei University campus to assist their 3,600 colleagues who were besieged by police in Seoul Friday (Reuters photo)

Suharto says political system to stay

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesian President Suharto said Friday there was no need to change the country's political system, and blamed recent riots in Jakarta on anarchists.

Mr. Suharto, in his annual address to the nation, made no reference to his political future in the hour-long speech broadcast live from parliament on the eve of

Indonesia's 51st independence anniversary.

Speculation has mounted as to whether Mr. Suharto, 75 and among the world's longest-serving heads of state, will seek a seventh five-year term in presidential elections scheduled for 1998. The subject did not come up.

"If we are not yet satisfied with the role played by the

three forums of our political forces, let us ameliorate the existing forums," said Mr. Suharto, who was dressed in a gray business suit and read from a prepared text.

"And not by establishing a new forum where the support of people is still entirely unclear," he added.

His was referring to the three political groups allowed to contest elections in

Indonesia, the ruling Golkar Party, the Christian-nationalist Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) and the Muslim-oriented United Development Party.

"Let us all respect the national consensus we have agreed upon with great difficulty. Let us not tinker with it just for the sake of fulfilling the ambition of individuals or groups."

Analysts said Mr. Suharto's comments signalled a retreat into conservatism in the face of political unrest and suggested he was in no hurry to give up power. They also said the speech was remarkable for what it did not contain — the traditional Suharto promise of increased openness and a more just society.

U.S. Army to stay away from Sri Lanka war

COLOMBO (R) — The U.S. army said Friday it did not intend to get involved in Sri Lanka's 13-year-old ethnic war with Tamil rebels, putting to rest recent media speculation of closer military cooperation with Colombo.

Separately, the Sri Lankan army said two suspected rebel suicide bombers were killed by police Thursday before they could attack ports and shipping minister M.H.M. Ahsruff in the east coast town of Kalmunai, 240 kilometres from Colombo.

The rebels were found with a bicycle packed with explosives.

The Hawaii-based U.S. Pacific Command, responding to recent reports, said in a statement its relations with the local army remained confined to routine cooperation.

"We emphasise that United States Armed Forces have not been, and will not be, involved in the current conflict," it said in a statement faxed to Reuters.

"United States forces have previously conducted Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) events with personnel from Sri Lanka's army and air force," it said. "These JCET events focused on improving the medical, logistical, leadership, safety, land navigation and other training skills of the Sri Lankan forces."

Sri Lanka's state-run television this week reported a veiled threat to the United States by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels after Washington named the guerrillas as key suspects in last month's bombing of a train.





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Jordan Times

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
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Jordan Times advertising department.Beyond the riots:
need to look ahead

THE RIOTS that broke out in Karak and other southern cities and towns yesterday are extremely regrettable on more than one count. First because law and order was broken and violated, resulting in injuries, looting, burnt buildings and cars as well as dangerous tensions. Second, because the healthy democratic atmosphere and the reasonable level of tolerance that this country has worked so hard to achieve since 1989 was suddenly threatened, raising the spectre of discord and disharmony instead of dialogue and fraternity among members of the same family. Third, because all Jordanians should have seen eye-to-eye on the issue over which the riots apparently erupted, namely the lifting of state subsidies on food and animal feed prices. There should have been no fundamental differences in opinion on whether this step had to be taken, because the future of Jordan's economic well-being depended on it, and the exhaustive national debate that preceded it should have settled the problem once and for all and left no room for disagreement and confusion.

What went wrong?
Is it the inconclusive debate (some would say, the serious rift) that hung between the government and the Parliament after taking the decision to lift the subsidies reflecting itself on the streets of the southern cities, which remain hastily rung in nature and outlook? While people in urban centres could absorb the increase in bread and other commodities' prices, proponents of this theory argue, the rural areas in particular would be hard pressed to accept the new system, especially where the new animal feed costs are concerned.

Or is agitation by certain political groups, abetted by foreign countries or elements, within or without a concerted plan to create trouble and unrest? This is a probability that cannot be discounted, agree people from all shades of opinion in the political spectrum, although they think that for different reasons and from different perspectives. Considering that it is still unclear whether there was a foreign driving force behind the 1989 riots, no one would want to discount this possibility. And certainly not after His Majesty the King accused parties with "foreign links" of being behind the riots. It is also important in this context to note that Karak is well-known to be home to the biggest number of pro-Iraq Baathists than anywhere else in Jordan who studied and graduated from Iraqi colleges over the past two decades.

Or is what happened was a result of mishandling by the police, either on the spot where they intervened to pre-empt what have been a "peaceful" demonstration after Friday's prayers at Al Omari Mosque, as some parliamentarians and Karak residents contended, or through the security forces' heavy presence and, "unnecessary" display of force in the city just before the riots began? His Majesty was clear in his speech about the security forces exercising maximum restraint, and we have full trust in his words. There were no accusations, in fact, that once riots started the police used any excessive force.

Be that as it may, it could be a combination, or a potent mix, of all these factors that led to the tragic and shocking events in the south. Of course there may be other reasons as well.

But regardless, or perhaps despite, of what happened, Jordanians have now to look ahead and not at the past. The burning, the looting and the shooting and throwing of stones at the security men cannot be condoned; to the contrary, rioting against our own institutions, property and people has to be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

However, tragic as these acts were, they should belong to the past. Jordan and the Jordanians should leave them behind as we begin anew the march to ensure that the future belongs to us. This we can best do not by writing off democracy and openness as a way of life but by clinging to the democratic achievements that we have made already and by building on them until the target of a free, stable and prosperous Jordan is reached.

Jordanian Perspective

Lessons to be learnt and realities to be understood

By Dr. Musa K...

IT IS THE sincere hope of every patriotic Jordanian that the events that took place in the southern towns on Friday were isolated and were contained. We have to learn our lessons from what happened. It would seem that there are a few people among us who are determined to pose a challenge to the well-being, security and stability of our country.

It is strange that some people seem to have given little serious thought to the compensation system that the government has set in place to offset the increase in the prices of bread, the development that is apparently being cited as the main reason behind the events on Friday.

There cannot be any argument that the amount of compensation is not good enough. A simple calculation of the average size of Jordanian families and their consumption of bread would indicate that the amount of compensation offered is indeed good enough in the context of bread, but, of course, not enough to help people absorb the overall increase in cost of living in Jordan.

Judging from the first three days of the payment of the cash compensation to offset the impact of the price increase, we appear to have established a workable system in this regard. The task now awaits the government is to ensure that the compensation system is not abused and the needy get the support that they deserve.

The remodelling of the subsidy system will, hopefully, help the poor segment of our society absorb the impact of the increase in bread price, which, despite all arguments, was inevitable and could not have been put off for a later date whenever it came up.

In fact, successive governments, obviously mindful of the

negative impact it would have on their record as executive authorities, shirked away from any serious moves to increase the price of bread, a step that should have been taken years ago. As such, it is all the more impressive that the Kabarti government, whose more than half of its whose members are deputies who definitely seek reelection, courageously adopted the move.

It was a hard-won battle for Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabarti in Parliament although it caused a deepening of the rift between the Islamic Action Front (IAF)-led opposition and the government. Obviously the violent flare-up in the south was not expected.

Now, let us face the facts behind the increase.

For one thing, the removal of the subsidies was an essential part of the economic restructuring programme that Jordan is successfully implementing. Regardless of whether it was demanded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the reality cannot be brushed aside that the move helped increase the confidence of the donor community, which has been very appreciative of the Kingdom's economic problems. To oppose the removal for the sake of opposing it because it is somehow linked with the IMF does not make much sense.

The special parliamentary panel which was entrusted with handling the issue did come up with proposals, but a methodical scrutiny proved that those options were not feasible since they did not take into consideration the basic objective of a total removal of subsidies. It was a little strange that the panel and some other deputies in the Lower House insisted that the proposals be adopted because such a demand was not realistic.

We do understand the anxiety of our deputies to put distance themselves from the increase in bread prices, not because of fears of losing popularity. At the same time, we would have expected our deputies to be better aware of the requirements of economic restructuring and to turn to the constituencies in a bid to make the voters understand the inevitability of the move rather than turning it into a jobless issue.

If the concern of those deputies was over the impact of the increase in the price of bread on the daily lives of their voters, then they should have focused more on studying whether the amount of cash compensation offered by the government was enough to offset the hikes. Instead of the move we saw and heard was a demand for air time on television that the deputies opposing the government move could make that their voters were told that they tried their best and failed. In one way, the entire episode of increasing the price of bread and removing subsidies highlighted the peculiarities of politics in Jordan so that we could all learn from it. More importantly, a very significant move in reform was adopted, advancing our quest to reshape our economic system and break away from practices that are not compatible with our moves to achieve self-reliance.

Of course, there is the social cost of the move. And here the challenge for the government is to make absolutely sure that the impact of the increase do not add to the daily problems of our people. That essentially means ensuring that not a single Jordanian family suffer from the increase in the price of bread.

Israel has no right to reopen
negotiations on Hebron

QUESTIONS RELATED to peace in the Middle East in the light of Israel's intransigent position as well as the situation in Chechnya, Turkey's new moves in the Middle East and domestic affairs including the controversy over the prices of bread and other staples were given prominence in the local press.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has no right to reopen the question of redeployment in Hebron in fresh negotiations with the Palestinian leadership since the Palestinians had reached an agreement on the issue with the previous Labour-led government, said Sultan Al Hattab, a writer for Al Ra'i. By dragging its feet over the redeployment in Hebron and by heightening tension through banning Muslims from praying at Al Ibrahim Mosque, the Israeli government is heading for real trouble and a new intifada, warned the writer. Mr. Netanyahu's hardline policies, said the writer, are leading towards an explosion which will ruin any chances for peace.

Mohammad Kawash, a writer for Al Dustour, tackled the question of Jewish settlements, saying this too is bound to ruin the peace process. By ending a moratorium on the construction of settlements, the Israeli government is practically freezing peace negotiations with the Arabs and by refusing to quit the Lebanese and Syrian lands occupied since 1967, it is trying to impose a de facto situation on the Arabs and the world at large, said the writer.

The Arabs who are witnessing Israel's adamant position with regard to the situation in occupied Palestine have concluded that Israel cannot be trusted in dealing with them piecemeal and have been demanding a comprehensive peace on all tracks, said the writer. As such the whole Middle East peace process is deadlocked not because the Arabs are refusing to negotiate with Israel, added the writer, but rather because



THE WEEK IN PRINT

Israel refuses the idea of negotiations over occupied lands. Mahmoud Rimawi, a writer for Al Ra'i, dealt with the recent flurry of diplomatic activities among Arab leaders describing them as an extension to the recent Cairo Arab summit that aimed at rallying Arab ranks vis-a-vis Israel's intransigent position. The Cairo summit revived the hope for unification of Arab ranks and the current contacts among the Arab leaders are bound to enhance the Arab moves towards building a solid front in the face of Israel's adamant stands with regard to a comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict, said the writer. In the writer's views, the Arab governments ought to capitalise on the present international community's displeasure over the Israeli government's settlements policies and should exert concerted efforts towards aborting Israel's expansionist plans not only in Palestine but also in Lebanon and Syria. He said there is dire need for an Arab League meeting to prepare for another Arab summit which will take practical steps to reaffirm the Arab Nation's demands for the restoration of occupied lands in exchange for peace.

Reflecting on the situation in Chechnya, Taher Al Adwan, a writer for Al Dustour said that it is shameful for the so-called Western democracies to ignore the events in Chechnya where a major power is forcibly colonising a small nation. It is also shameful for the Arab and Islamic countries to stand by and watch their brothers and sisters slain because they demand freedom, said the writer. "If Russia is a democ-

cratic nation why is it exterminating another nation and committing crimes against oppressed people seeking freedom from colonial rule?" asked the writer. Despite the clear disparity in the military balance between the Chechens and the Russians, said the writer, the heroic Chechen people are continuing the struggle for their freedom and are setting a model for other oppressed nations seeking independence.

Mahmoud Rimawi tackled the same topic saying that the war in Chechnya is sapping the economic powers of both Russia and Chechnya. For Russia it is a war of attrition that is wasting Moscow's economic and military power and for the Chechens the war is destructive to their country's infrastructure, said the columnist for Al Ra'i. What is happening in Chechnya is not a mutiny by the people against a ruler but it is a revolution waged by the oppressed people of Chechnya against a colonial power, added the writer. The writer said Russia should not allow itself to be bogged down in another Afghanistan that would drain its military might and win the hostility of many nations but can find a way out of the present entanglement by organising a referendum to sound out the views of the Russian and Chechen people vis-a-vis this situation.

A writer for Al Ra'i daily hailed the recent moves of the Turkish government to cement Ankara's ties with the Arab and Islamic countries. Should the Turkish government succeed in linking Turkey's national interests with those of the Arab and Islamic countries then major developments are expected in the Middle East region, said

Sultan Al Hattab. Turkey's Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan has already crossed the red lines by ignoring the United States threats not to deal with Iran and now the Arab and Muslim nations expect this Islamist leader to take further steps and deny America access to military bases to strike against Arab and Islamic countries, said the writer. Another major step by Mr. Erbakan, he said, would be the termination of the embargo on Iraq and ending the suffering of people in a neighbouring Muslim nation.

George Haddad, a writer for Al Dustour, described Mr. Erbakan's moves as a real mutiny against the United States, which he termed as the sole super power that has been dominating Turkey's policies for decades. The writer praised the Turkish premier's moves to establish closer ties with the Arab and Muslim countries and his plans to meet with the leaders of Iraq, Syria and Iran to find a solution to the Kurdish question that has irked these countries for so long. He said that Erbakan's moves which he has launched through contacts with Tehran and Baghdad should receive all out backing from the Arab countries.

Fakhri Kassar discussed the recent increases in food stuffs and said that bread was not the only staple that irked the Jordanian people. Limited and low-income groups are hard hit by the recent sharp increases in the prices of dairy products as well as the bread which constitutes a basic food for a large margin of Jordanians, noted the writer. The Jordanian citizens feel that their burdens have become intolerable at a time when their income has not much changed to help them cope with the ever rising cost of living, he added. The writer said everyone is dismayed with the increases while what remained of the middle class will find it impossible to make both ends meet under the present circumstances.

LETTERS

A sense of sharing

To the Editor:

THE ROYAL Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) is about to release some animals into the wild. How uninteresting, boring even, to the Jordanian Arab or Arabian oryx. Arabian because this species occurred only in Arabia. But very few people across the Arabian countries know of its existence. Like many subjects of our own such as archaeology, history and geology it was non-Arabs who did studies to try and save things. I am not going to ask why because I am not Darwin nor a genetic engineer; rather, I want to deal with it from a new and optimistic start.

What is the Arabian oryx? Where is it and what is its story? It is an animal with long-straight horns, a white body, brown legs and is about the size of an ordinary donkey (I hope everyone knows the size of donkeys). At the moment the oryx is an endangered species and exists in zoos and reserves in various parts of the world. Only in Oman is it free to roam once again in the wild (perhaps also in Saudi Arabia, I am not up-to-date on that).

The story of this animal goes back to the time of the Great African Rift Valley, that separated Africa from Arabia 30-40 million years ago. When the spit occurred and the Red Sea became an impassable barrier, the animals in the Arabian peninsula were forever separated from their brothers in Africa. They could only move north and east up into areas with different climate and ecology and as a result the animals changed gradually and became a different species — the Arabian oryx. Large groups moved across Arabia northwards as far as the Fertile Crescent and perhaps as far north-east as the Tigris River. It's not known exactly when the oryx became extinct here in Jordan but they are mentioned in T.E. Lawrence's writings and were therefore still present in 1918.

In 1962 a team launched a campaign to capture wild oryx. All of the team, except the guide, were non-Arabs: all of its money came from outside and a committee of non-Arabs was formed, called the Arabian Oryx World Herd Trustees. Their mission was to save the oryx from extinction. After much hard work in the Empty Quarter and in the mountains of Oman and Yemen they captured the last nine wild oryx. These nine were the seed of all beautiful animals that we have here today.

Jordan was the first Arab country to start a captive breeding programme and this was done by the RSCN at Shomari Wildlife Reserve, near Azraq. It has been extremely successful and a source of great pride to the team who worked there for years in obscurity. No-one ever complained about the desert temperatures nor the days of dust that turned everything into darkness. Like magic, all the tiredness from years of eating dusty food, being under the sun, on stand-by 24 hours a day, washes away when, after an 8-month pregnancy, a female gives birth to a little brown, scarcely moving new oryx. In 1979 we all welcomed the first baby female into this world with such happiness that some of us could not hold back the few tears that fell down our cheeks. It was the first taste of success and I will never forget that moment. The news spread to the world outside and the name of Dohwa was registered in the world's books.

Now we have around 200 animals at Shomari, but they are not free. They need to be released into the wild where they belong. We all appreciate the efforts of the foreign groups that saved the Arabian oryx and who have supported our project in Jordan. Now the RSCN is asking for support to release those animals. For this they have designed a special sponsoring programme which would enable all Jordanians to share with the protection and reintroduction of this unique Arabian animal back into its home. Since it was hunted by our hands when we were poor and needed to eat, can this beautiful animal be saved by the same hands? Are we a nation of give and take or just of consumers?

To all those who are not just takers, they can call the RSCN and find out how to sponsor an oryx. It's a responsibility we should all share, and the amount of money that is needed for the reintroduction which will bring the desert to life once again, is very small, even unmentionable compared to the joy of seeing animals roaming this good land.

Jad Younis,
Amman

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

New
Israel
openNo arrest
bombing
questionTurkish
welcom
of Iraq

SINGAPORE (AP) — Prime Minister Mahatma Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi said his country would support the repatriation of the Turkish-Iraqi pipeline.

In a speech at a forum in Turkey, the Indian leader said his country suffered severe economic losses because of the pipeline's closure.

His government is working to win at least \$1 billion in compensation for the loss of the pipeline, he said.

He did not say whether India would start the pipeline through Turkey, but he said Turkey was a "friendly neighbour."

Mr. Erbakan did not specifically say he requested for the

Israel preparing moves to open peace talks with Syria

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel is preparing a secret plan aimed at making small steps towards reopening peace talks with Syria which have been frozen for the last six months, a report said here Friday.

Dore Gold, the senior political adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, has proposed that Israeli and Syrian diplomats resume discussions at the Wye plantation outside Washington to build confidence and lessen the mistrust, the Israeli newspaper

Yediot

Aharonot said.

Working groups responsible for issues such as security, economics, energy and water sharing, would also meet in the Middle East, under Mr. Gold's proposal.

An alert system could also be put in place to avoid any confrontations between the Israeli and Syrian armies, Mr. Gold added.

Mr. Gold is convinced that the complete normalisation of ties with Syria sought by former Israeli Prime Minister and peace architect Shimon Peres was premature, the paper

added.

"We have to forget this obsession and concentrate on issues of security, before dreaming of peace," the paper quoted Mr. Gold as saying.

He also said he would like France to be involved in the Israeli-Syrian peace process in addition to the United States.

The Israeli political adviser said that "this plan is more based on form than fundamentals, but will allow the opening of negotiations on the future of the Golan Heights."

Mr. Gold said Syrian President Hafez Al Assad wanted to restart talks before the Nov. 5 presidential elections in the United States for fear that if President Bill Clinton was not reelected, Syria would be isolated by a more conservative administration.

Syria has rejected Israel's offer to first withdraw the two countries' troops from Lebanon and reiterated its longstanding position that there can be no peace without a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Mordechai, Arafat to meet soon on pullout

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel announced on Thursday plans for a second high-level meeting with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat but dismissed as "propaganda" his appeal for U.S. help in Middle East peacemaking.

Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, who on Thursday night presented to senior cabinet ministers a plan for Israeli army redeployment in the West Bank city of Hebron, will meet Mr. Arafat soon, his spokesman said.

Israel's Channel One Television said Mr. Mordechai has refused to meet Mr. Arafat until receiving Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's backing for his Hebron redeployment ideas.

Mr. Mordechai's plan recommends undefined security adjustments to an existing Hebron pull-back agreement reached between the dovish Israeli government and Mr. Netanyahu ousted in May elections and the Palestinians, Israel's Channel Two Television said.

Mr. Netanyahu's office

confirmed.

Mr. Mordechai presented his plan in an evening meeting in Jerusalem. It said the plan would continue to be discussed next week and refused to elaborate.

Mahmoud Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) architect of Israel-PLO peace accords, said he opposed any changes to the Hebron plan reached with Israel's previous government.

"Any changes in the agreement are dangerous because it can lead to other changes which will bring about the collapse of the accords," Mr. Abbas told Israel Television's Arabic service.

Mr. Netanyahu said earlier on Thursday Israel wanted to keep its agreements but Mr. Mordechai had to find a way to manage the complicated security needs of the only Palestinian city with Jewish settlers living in it.

There are some 400 Jewish settlers living in heavily fortified enclaves inside Hebron, which is home to about 120,000 Palestinians and has been a flashpoint of violence.

"This is not just an interest of the state of Israel...this is an interest first and foremost of the Palestinian (National) Authority and of Arafat," Mr. Netanyahu told reporters.

Under a 1995 deal with the PLO, Israel committed to having its troops hand over parts of the city to Palestinian self-rule.

In a letter on Wednesday, Mr. Arafat asked U.S. President Bill Clinton to put pressure on Mr. Netanyahu to honour peace deals the previous Israeli government signed with the PLO.

"Arafat apparently for his own reasons, for reasons of public relations or propaganda of one kind or another, prefers to appeal to Washington," Israeli cabinet spokesman Danny Naveh told Israel's army radio.

He said Mr. Netanyahu's own resistance to meeting Mr. Arafat should not make the Palestinian leader feel he lacked a peace partner.

Mr. Arafat wants to meet Mr. Netanyahu to discuss resuming peace talks, Mr. Netanyahu says

he will meet Mr. Arafat only if necessary.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy in July became the first and so far only member of Mr. Netanyahu's cabinet to meet Mr. Arafat.

Mr. Arafat wrote Mr. Clinton that Mr. Netanyahu was endangering Middle East peacemaking by renewing a Jewish settlement drive in occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip lands.

Mr. Netanyahu is opposed to swapping land-for-peace with Arabs and infuriated Palestinians by lifting restrictions the previous government imposed on expanding Jewish settlements.

Palestinians view the more than 130,000 Jews living among the nearly two million Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a provocation. The PLO wants to eventually set up an independent state in the areas. Mr. Netanyahu opposes a Palestinian state.

No arrests in Dhahran bombing, but many questioned — diplomat

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Saudi authorities have made no arrests and obtained no confessions in the June 25 terrorist bombing in Dhahran, but many people have been questioned, a Saudi embassy spokesman said Friday.

"There have been some people questioned. No arrests have been made. Nothing has been announced," said A. Al Thai, the embassy spokesman.

"If there was any (arrests or confessions), we would be more than anxious to announce it," he told AFP.

The Saudi diplomat's statement came amid a flurry of reports that Saudi authorities have made arrests in the bombing of a U.S. military housing complex in Dhahran in which 19 Americans were killed.

ABC News late Thursday cited a senior Saudi official close to the investigation as saying that three young Saudi men were being held for the bombing. One of them confessed under torture to the bombing, the source told the network.

"This is the first time I heard of it — from that report," said Mr. Thai.

"There are a lot of suspects, a lot of people being questioned, some people more thoroughly than others, some longer than others," he said, adding that there had been no arrests or confessions.

National Public Radio earlier in the week cited an administration official as saying Washington had learned of arrests in the case through its own intelligence sources, but not directly from the Saudis.

Administration spokesmen have either declined comment about the reports or expressed scepticism, but have not denied them outright.

Mr. Thai, who declined to discuss the arrangements between Saudi and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) officials for sharing information in the case, said "American officials have been kept abreast of everything that is important."

"There are so many factors involved, but everyone who has an interest in this is involved one way or another," he said, adding that there had been "all kinds of cooperation and exchange of ideas between us and American officials."

U.S. walks fine line with Turkey

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States is walking a fine line with Turkey's new Islamist-led government, trying to balance concerns about Ankara's new closeness with Iran and Iraq with a need to maintain strong ties to a key North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ally.

Officials are sympathetic about what they say are serious energy needs that have led Turkey to strike a new \$23 billion natural gas deal with Iran and to seek special relief from U.N. sanctions so it can acquire oil from Iraq.

But still they are worried about these strengthening ties with two states Washington considers major international troublemakers and uncertain how Ankara's first Islamist prime minister in 73 years will deal, long term, with a panoply of issues of pivotal interest to the United States and the West.

Months of political instability and manoeuvring brought Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan and his pro-Islamic Refah Party to power last month after Turkey's Western-oriented secular parties split. He took office in a coalition with staunch secularist Tansu Ciller, a leader of a pro-Western conservative party who is now foreign minister.

Although Mr. Erbakan has espoused what some call an anti-West, anti-U.S., anti-NATO, anti-European union, anti-Israel agenda, he has since softened his rhetoric, at least temporarily.

"The price of his getting to be prime minister was basically to agree not to do things that would have been inimical to our interest," a senior U.S. official told Reuters. "The fact he had to make these commitments demonstrates that at least with respect to most of the core issues, there is not sufficient support for a government in Turkey that would take a radically different approach."

One encouraging sign, officials say, is that Mr. Erbakan's government extended for 5 1/2 months Operation Provide Comfort, the Turkey-based multi-national air operation that has deterred Iraqi attacks on civilians and enforced a no-fly zone in northern Iraq since the 1991 U.S.-led Gulf war.

On a trip to Ankara last month, Under-Secretary of State Peter Tarnoff also received assurances of continuity in other policies, including Turkey's burgeoning ties with Israel, although some say that relationship is effectively on hold.

While experts see Turkey's pro-Western military as still exercising important influence, they concede nationalist trends and Mr. Erbakan's ideological inclination to orient his country more eastward than westward could cause problems.

Alan Makovsky of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy says Mr. Erbakan overrode his foreign ministry in choosing Iraq — which the United States considers the world's leading sponsor of state terrorism — for his first foreign trip.

That visit, last week, resulted in Mr. Erbakan signing a new \$23 billion, 23-year accord to purchase natural gas from Iran, raising the awkward possibility Washington might have to invoke sanctions under a new law against Turkey.

The law requires that the president impose sanctions on companies that invest \$40 million or more in Iran and Libya. Although Washington criticised the deal, it has not decided if sanctions apply and is mulling Turkey's argument that the deal constitutes trade, not investment. It could take months.

Cyprus calls for restraint after killings

Security forces on high alert at flashpoints

NICOSIA (Agencies) — The Cypriot government appealed on Friday to the Greek Cypriot community to show self-restraint hours before the funeral of a second Greek Cypriot killed in protests against Turkey's occupation of the divided island.

"We recommend to the Cyprus people coolheadedness and self-restraint," spokesman Yiannakis Cassoulides told reporters in the capital Nicosia. "We also believe that there should be action to defuse the situation in Cyprus."

Two Greek Cypriots were killed this week in some of the bloodiest clashes on the island since Turkey invaded and occupied its northern third in 1974 after a brief coup engineered by the military government then ruling Greece.

Tasos Isaac was beaten to death by a group from the Turkish Cypriot side in the U.N.-controlled buffer zone on Sunday.

A second man, Solomos

Solomos, was shot dead by security forces in the Turkish-occupied areas on Wednesday as he tried to pull down a Turkish flag on the edge of the buffer zone in the village of Dherinia some 100 kilometres southeast of Nicosia.

Thousands of mourners attended the funeral of as political and religious leaders sought to defuse the tension.

Solomos, 26, was killed by Turkish Cypriot troops Wednesday while climbing a flagpole along the U.N.-patrolled "green line" in a bid to pull down a Turkish flag.

Some 3,000 people, many waving Greek and Cypriot flags, gathered in the eastern town of Paralimni for his funeral on Friday, spilling out of a Greek Orthodox church, which displayed a banner reading "freedom or death."

Mourners lining both sides of the road clapped as pallbearers dressed

entirely in black and led by a police band bore the body to the church in a glass-topped wooden coffin draped with a blue-and-white Greek flag.

Hundreds of Greek Cypriot police lay down barbed wire and took up positions at a sensitive spot along the "green line."

Elite anti-terrorist squads were also deployed at Dherinia, where Solomos was shot and two U.N. peacekeepers were wounded on Wednesday, and some vehicles heading towards Paralimni were checked for weapons, witnesses said.

Greek Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis is due to fly to Cyprus on Saturday to be briefed on the crisis but will skip Solomos' funeral in an apparent effort to help defuse tensions.

Police have dug trenches and rolled out barbed wire. Hungarian and Austrian peacekeepers were reinforced by British U.N. soldiers from Nicosia and

a platoon from the Argentine contingent, which usually mans the western buffer zone.

"We have others deployed nearby for reinforcements in a matter of minutes," U.N. spokesman Waldemar Rokoszewski told Reuters, adding that the situation was still tense.

Gustave Feissel, U.N. chief of mission on the island, on Friday met Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş.

Mr. Rokoszewski said the meeting was designed to "discuss how to defuse the situation at the island."

Mr. Feissel told reporters later: "We certainly hope there will be no more trouble but we have enforced our manning in that area and we have talked to both sides to show maximum restraint."

Turkish premier welcomes reopening of Iraq oil pipeline

SINGAPORE (AP) — Turkey's Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan said Friday that the reopening of the Turkish-Iraqi oil pipeline was "an extremely important development" that would help Turkey recover lost revenue.

In a speech at a Singapore-Turkey business forum, the visiting Turkish leader said his country suffered "severe economic losses" because of United Nations sanctions imposed on Iraq to punish it for the 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Officials estimate the losses to be \$27 billion.

His government is now working to win at least partial compensation for lost trade, Mr. Erbakan said without elaborating.

Iraq has been allowed by the U.N. Security Council to sell \$1 billion worth of oil every 90 days for an initial, renewable 180-day period. The larger share of the oil must be sold via a twin pipeline from Kirkuk in northern Iraq to Ceyhan on Turkey's Mediterranean Sea coast.

"We regard this (opening of the pipeline) as an extremely important development," Mr. Erbakan said.

He did not say when he expects oil to start flowing through the pipeline, or how much Turkey would like to receive to help offset Iraq's large debts with its neighbour.

Mr. Erbakan did not refer specifically to Turkey's request for exemption

from U.N. sanctions.

Before the Gulf war, Iraq was Turkey's biggest trading partner with annual two-way trade between them amounting to \$2 billion.

On Wednesday, Iraq and Turkey signed a trade protocol governing the role to be played by Turkish firms in supplying Iraq with goods under the May 20 oil-for-food deal between Baghdad and the U.N.

Mr. Erbakan began his five-nation tour in Tehran where he signed a \$20 billion agreement to buy natural gas from Iran for 22 years, ignoring U.S. pleas to cancel the project.

U.S. President Bill Clinton recently signed a law allowing Washington to penalise non-U.S. companies that invest in the oil and gas industries of Iran and Libya, accused by Washington of backing international terrorism.

Mr. Erbakan said Turkey is expanding cooperation with the United States, adding that its growing ties with the European Union ensure that Turkey can "act as bridge between the EU and the Islamic World."

"Turkey also attaches great importance to promoting its economic, commercial, social and cultural relations with Islamic countries," said Mr. Erbakan, who took power in June as the head of an Islamic-led coalition.

U.S. alarmed by Israel's settlement plans but wants no confrontation

By Lamis Andoni

BOSTON — The American administration is alarmed by recent Israeli decisions to step up settlement activities in the occupied Arab territories but will not enter into an open confrontation with the Israeli government over the issue, administration officials have said.

They said that the American government is waiting for Israeli clarifications before deciding whether the recent Israeli decisions constituted "a fundamental policy change" that could undermine the Middle East peace process.

However, the officials said that the U.S. will definitely deduct all of the funds that the Israeli government is putting into any settlement activities from the \$10 billion loan guarantees that were approved by the Bush administration in 1992.

The officials said that there will be definite deductions by the end of the fiscal year — in the end of September — but refused to disclose the amount that will be deducted. Well-informed

sources in Washington expressed doubt that the deductions will be of significance to send a political signal to Israel to halt the settlement activities.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that the amount that will be deducted from the loan guarantees will also include funds that the former Labour government used on settlements over the last year.

For despite "the freeze" in settlements activity introduced by the former Israeli government construction continued and the American administration believes that some American money was used to finance those activities.

But the administration's main concern is not the recent Israeli decisions as much as how will these decisions affect Israel's ability to reestablish "a partnership with the Palestinians" like the one that evolved under the Israeli Labour government.

In the view of American officials, the peace process has survived settlement activities during the Israeli Labour government rule because the former Israeli

government was able to forge "a partnership" working relationship with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

Consequently, the American administration is alarmed that the "unfreeze" of settlement activities will send the wrong message to the Palestinians and further undermine the prospects of renewing "the Israeli-Palestinian partnership."

If (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu is trying to gain Palestinian confidence he is sure doing it the wrong way," the well-placed administration official told the Jordan Times.

Thus, American officials believe that the repercussions of the Israeli decision, and therefore the American reaction to it, will partly depend on how the Palestinians choose to deal with the issue, especially if the Israeli decisions are put into action.

From the official American viewpoint, even though the Palestinians had repeatedly complained about continued settlement activities under the Labour government, they had

never taken an action to halt the peace process, or end "the partnership" with Israel.

Officials in Washington believe that the Palestinian National Authority is more suspicious now of the Israeli decisions, because it feels that the partnership that was established with the Labour Party has crumbled and there is serious uncertainty about the future of the whole peace process.

Yet they feel that Mr. Netanyahu could still do something to re-establish trust, and probably partnership with the Palestinians if he urgently takes other steps such as redeployment of Israeli troops in Hebron.

It was not clear whether the U.S. would consider Israeli redeployment from Hebron as sufficient to prove that the Israeli government is committed to its peace agreements with the Palestinians even if it stepped up settlement activities.

But judging by interviews with administration officials, the American attitude towards the Israeli settlement policies will

depend on its own evaluation of the kind of settlement activities the Israeli government will initiate as well as their effect on advancing talks with the Palestinians.

For example, the administration seems to differentiate between activities that will lead to the expansion of the settlements and construction that aims at improving the infrastructure of existing colonies.

Improving the infrastructure of the current settlements, such as bringing in mobile caravans to use as classrooms, do not appear to be activities that the administration will decide to be detrimental to the peace process. But the American evaluation will be influenced to an extent by the Palestinian reaction, since for the Palestinians such activities imply that it will be futile to negotiate the future of the settlements if Israel is making them a permanent fact on the ground.

According to a well-connected analyst in Washington, President Bill Clinton himself views settlement activities with more concern. The analyst said that

Mr. Clinton has privately told Mr. Netanyahu, in their meeting in Washington in July, that settlement activities will torpedo the peace process.

However, according to different American sources in Washington, the U.S. administration hopes that Mr. Netanyahu's recent decisions, are aimed at placating the settlers to give him a breathing space that will allow him to proceed with serious negotiations with the Palestinians.

Some administration officials, according to the same analysts, even believe that Mr. Netanyahu might be trying to undercut the influence of Ariel Sharon, the hardline infrastructure minister, by making "lesser concessions" to the settlers. But analysts, including Jewish American peace activists, fear that the administration is underestimating Mr. Netanyahu's commitment to the hardline slogans he raised during the election campaign.

However, administration officials, said that the administration prefers "to wait and see."

Jordan National Bank-Business Bank merger to create fourth largest bank

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordan National Bank and the Business Bank have agreed to merge into a single entity, which would be the fourth largest commercial bank in the Kingdom.

The decision comes ahead of an expected announcement that the Arab Bank is buying the Amman Bank for Investments and will turn it into an Islamic bank.

Rajai Muasher, chairman of the Business Bank, said the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) approved the decision of the two banks to merge and now the Comptroller of Companies have to set up a committee to determine the market value of their stocks.

"We hope the committee would be formed soon so that the merger procedures could be expedited quickly," Mr. Muasher told the

Jordan Times. He said the general assemblies of the two banks will hold a joint meeting after the committee sets the market value of the shares.

It will be the first voluntary merger of two financially sound banks and the new entity will retain the name Jordan National Bank.

"It is a step in the right direction and we expect a few more mergers to happen in the near future," CBJ Deputy Governor Michel Maro was quoted as saying by Reuters. "Mergers will strengthen banks and make them more able to compete and provide larger capital and shareholders' rights to diversify their services and products."

The CBJ, which has said that Jordan has too many banks, has asked all Jordanian commercial banks to raise their capital to JD 20 million before the end of the year. Market analysts

say a few small banks might find it difficult to meet the requirement given their none-too-good performance and the tight liquidity in the capital market.

Most other banks are said to be in a comfortable position to raise the capital because they have accumulated voluntary reserves that could be converted into capital.

Mr. Muasher said the merged entity will have much more than the required JD 20 million capital.

The Business Bank was formed in 1991 after the collapse of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI). The collapse did not affect the BCCI branches in Jordan because all its foreign reserves were held in the Kingdom in line with a demand by the CBJ, which apparently foresaw the collapse of BCCI's international operations.

The CBJ granted the BCCI licence to the Business Bank, which successfully negotiated a deal with the Central Bank to acquire the BCCI branches in Jordan.

With combined assets valued at JD 589 million, the new Business Bank-Jordan National Bank entity, which is expected to come into being as of early 1997, will be the fourth largest among Jordan's 21 commercial banks after the Arab Bank, the Housing Bank and the Islamic Bank, Reuters reported.

Meanwhile negotiations between the Arab Bank and the Amman Bank for Investments have reached an advanced stage and the buyout is expected to be announced soon.

The Amman Bank for Investments is managed under the direct supervision of the Central Bank of Jordan after it hit financial troubles.

Prospects for trade with Iraq, Palestinians edge up AFM share prices

AMMAN — Share prices at the Jordanian stock exchange have broken clear of a psychological mark, indicating continued enthusiasm sparked by prospects for trade with Iraq and the Palestinian territories, brokers said Friday.

The weekly report of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) said the general share price index based on 60 companies closed 0.26 per cent higher.

The net rise for the week was relatively small, in what the brokers attributed to fears sparked by a dispute between the government and parliament over proposed increases in the price of bread.

"The issue should have depressed prices, but the overall interest of investors appeared to have not only absorbed the depression but also edged up the prices," said a broker.

The AFM report said the share price index closed at 1402 points, up 0.36 points or 0.26 per cent from the week's opening of 1398.4 points.

Turnover went down by more than half to three million dinars in four days of trading from 6.3 million dinars in five days of business in the previous week.

Banks and financial institutions accounted for 1.3 million dinars of the weekly turnover, followed by industrial with 1.27 million dinars, service sector shares with 440,000 dinars and insurance stocks with 12,500 dinars.

Separate sectoral indices showed that commercial banks and financial institutions gained 0.5 per cent during the week, insurance stocks 0.06 per cent and industrial 0.06 per cent. Services sector shares slipped by

0.42 per cent. Stocks of 87 companies were traded during the week, with 25 of them closing with gains, 45 slipping and 17 remaining unchanged.

Pearl Consulting, a private sector firm which maintains its own indices for share prices, said its general index remained unchanged for the week at 80.99 points, down 15.21 points from the same period last year.

Pearl's sectoral indices showed commercial banks and financial institutions gaining 0.02 per cent, insurance stocks 0.07 per cent, and industrial 0.06 per cent. Service sector shares slipped by 0.28 per cent.

A further split-up by Pearl showed that in the banking sector commercial banks gained 0.14 per cent, investment banks slipped by 1.24 per cent, specialised banks gained 0.11 per cent and Islamic banks dropped 0.83 per cent.

In the services sector, energy firms gained 2.36 per cent, tourism and hotels gained two per cent, transport firms slipped by 2.8 per cent, and investment and real estate companies dropped 1.04 per cent.

Among industrials, mining firms slipped by 0.09 per cent, chemical and petroleum firms by 0.19 per cent, construction companies by 0.29 per cent, the supply and consumption sector by 0.95 per cent, engineering companies by 0.46 per cent and textile firms by 0.68 per cent. Phar-

maceuticals gained 1.9 per cent.

AFM brokers, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with standing market guidelines, said the recovery in prices after plunging below the 140 points in the index was largely due to institutional interest.

"For one thing, the announcement of the oil-for-food deal between Iraq and the U.N. has given a boost to Jordanian companies which now hope to increase their exports to Iraq," said a broker.

"For another, assurances given by U.S. officials that they would help remove trade barriers with Israel and the Palestinians have also given a shot in the arm for investors."

Lengthy inspection of cargo vehicles headed for Israel as well as the Palestinian market through Israeli-held territory is one of the key hurdles to increased Jordanian trade, officials and businessmen have complained.

Institutions and large investors were avoiding the market for several weeks and this was cited as one of the reasons behind the sharp plunge in prices for six weeks running.

Another reason was a crunch on liquidity resulting from the drain on capital away from the market to commercial bank accounts which offer relatively high yields on short and medium term deposits.

Israelis urged to stick with bonds

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced Thursday a "safety net" for govern-

ment bonds shaken by a wave of dumping by heavyweight investors.

"The governor of the Bank

of Israel, the finance minister and I met this morning and decided...on stabilisation steps for government bonds and a detailed and clear plan for a safety net for the bonds," Mr. Netanyahu said in broadcast remarks.

The central bank said shortly afterwards that it would intervene in the bond market to repurchase government bonds for the value of 750 million shekels.

The intervention will be done through three tenders and the bank said it would soak up excess liquidity caused by the repurchases by issuing short term bills of the value of 540 million shekels. Provident funds, long-term

savings funds with special tax benefits, have been dumping bonds to meet huge public withdrawals estimated to average about three billion shekels in August and in September.

The public has been redeeming provident funds because of their negative returns caused by falling stock and bond prices.

Mr. Netanyahu, speaking at a ceremony marking the reappointment of Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel, noted that government bonds represented more than half of the holdings of the provident funds.

"It is important here, when citizens are weighing things, not to be hasty...nor blindly follow newspaper headlines or people who are trying to make fast profits with all sorts of big offers on bonds," Mr. Netanyahu said.

OPPORTUNITY FOR INVESTMENT

We are an international group located in Berlin Germany with a Jordanian partner and we are willing to build in Northern Jordan the most modern equipped factory in the whole Middle East for cigarettes. A cigarette factory of 110,000,00 DM. We are looking for one or more silent partner/s but not more than 33% of 100. Please contact our man in Amman under phone No. 799824.

We are free for all kind of interviews in this matters.

Gifts Centre Introduces Trueste by Tiffany

IBRAHIM AND KHALID Abu Shakra Trading Co., owners of the Gifts Centre, Wednesday, introduced a new American perfume for women to the Jordanian public. The new perfume, Trueste by TIFFANY, was introduced during a press meeting held at the Amman Marriott Hotel.

Trueste by TIFFANY comes from the jeweller at the heart of New York City, a new fragrance that

embodies the spirit of life's Trueste. Trueste by TIFFANY is a refreshing expression of youthful verve. A delightful fruity floral, it immediately entices with its vivacious top notes of black-currant, apricot, peach and Mirabelle plum. A celebration of life's true moments that become cherished memories: true friendship; true romance; and being true to oneself. A natural

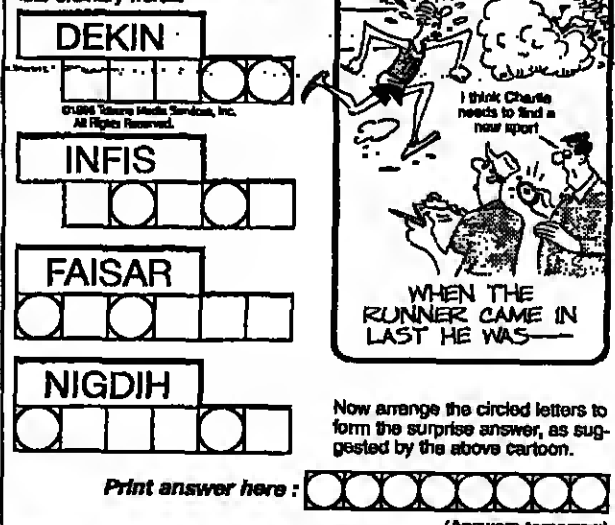
extension of TIFFANY's traditional role in life's celebrations. Trueste is the essence of the limitless possibilities and energy of youth. Ibrahim and Khalid Abu Shakra Trading Company now runs five branches in Amman to be able to communicate with a larger group of clientele and dealers.

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



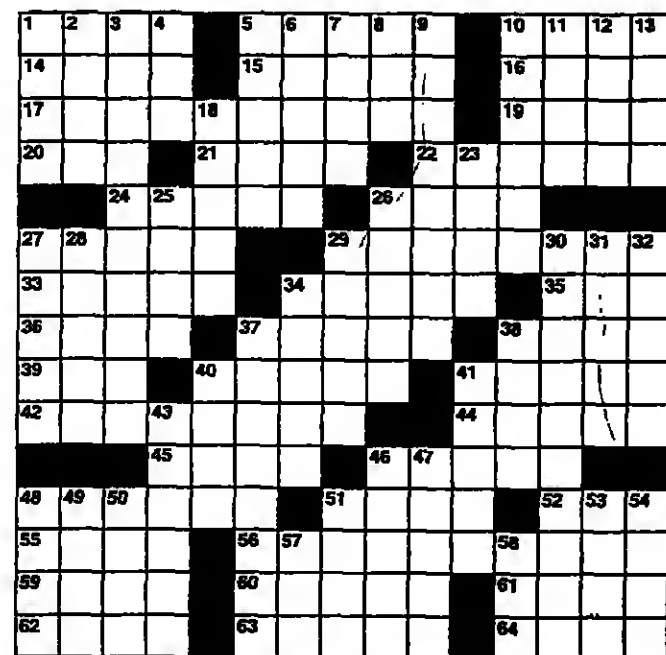
JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

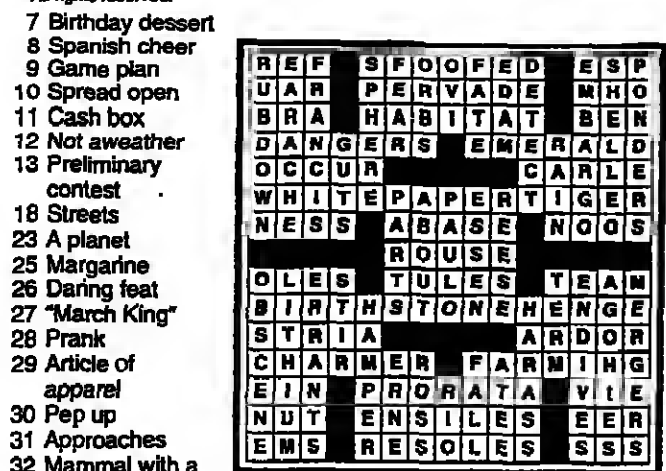


THE Daily Crossword by Daniel J. Read

- ACROSS
- Agent 007
 - Bill, legendary cowboy
 - Beehive State
 - Region
 - Glory
 - Egyptian river
 - Word difficult to pronounce
 - Fido's bane
 - Capp and Capone
 - Formerly
 - Lucky piece
 - Seashore
 - Asterisk
 - Bum with a hot liquid
 - Of the highest quality
 - Desert havens
 - Hoodlums
 - Bom
 - Doing
 - Glossy
 - "Terrible" ruler
 - Witness
 - To pieces
 - Longest river of France
 - Supercilious
 - Feeling of dread
 - Violin part
 - Authority
 - Comic Kaplan
 - Unpleasantly chilly
 - Declare
 - Nonsense
 - Isinglass
 - "Let's Make —"
 - Singer James
 - Frolic
 - Frenchman's income
 - Not diluted



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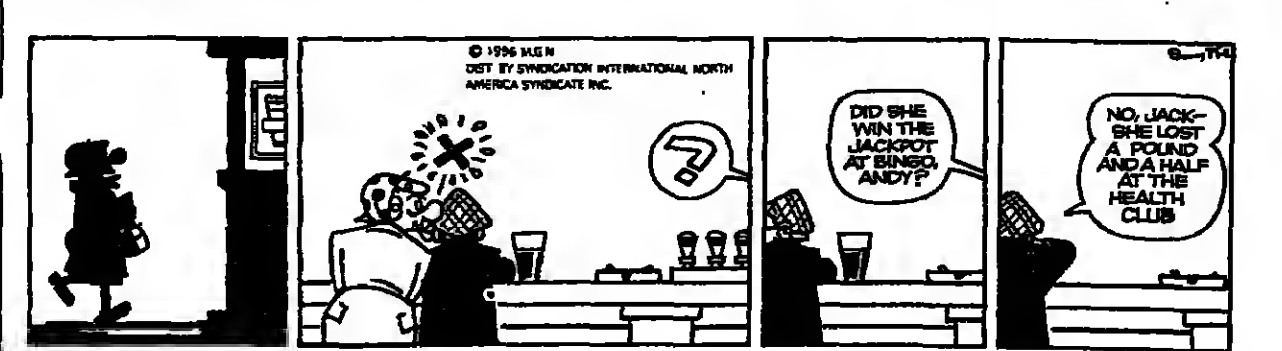


- DOWN
- California
 - Spoken
 - Dan Flather, e.g.
 - Touch lightly
 - Hammar parts
 - Precise
 - Birthday dessert
 - Spanish cheer
 - Game plan
 - Spread open
 - Cash box
 - Not aweater
 - Preliminary contest
 - Streets
 - Planet
 - Margarine
 - Daring feat
 - "March King"
 - Prank
 - Article of apparel
 - Pep up
 - Approaches
 - Mammal with a ringed tail
 - Be grateful
 - Typewriter part
 - Charged particles
 - Old
 - Han
 - Road sign
 - Former Egyptian leader
 - White poplar tree
 - Freeway exit
 - Sinful
 - Comic Imogene
 - Singer Campbell
 - Nora Charles' dog
 - Raportar's question
 - Summer drink
 - Study room

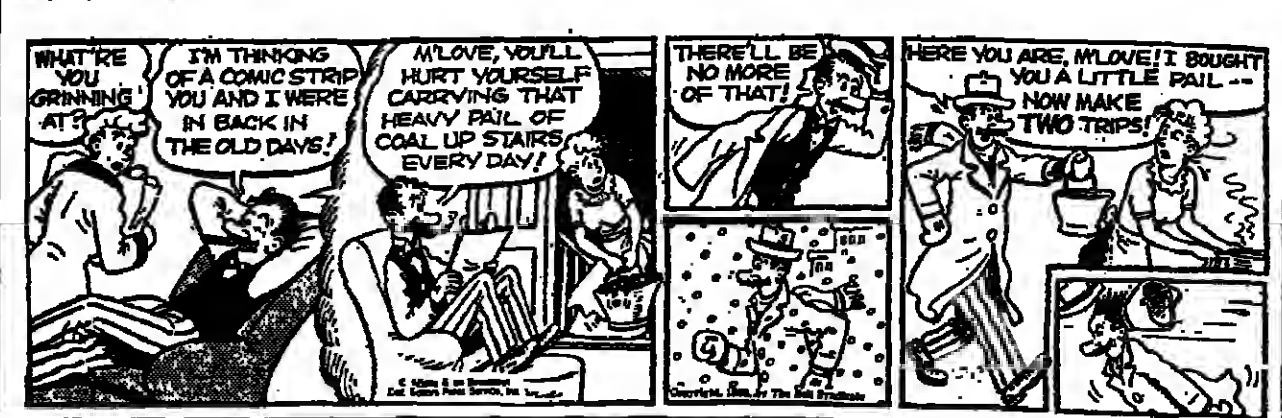
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SATURDAY AUGUST 17, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is a fine morning today to be alert to modern methods of gaining your aims quickly so study them well. Later this evening you will be able to consult with a fellow associate and determine how to get a new project functional.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Find the right ways and means today to accomplish your career activities in a most prestigious manner. Find better ways later this evening to please your mate and increase the happiness which is present.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can find ideas today from a fellow associate who like to talk and through this communication you can determine the best course of action. Use more modern methods later this evening for greater success.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Concentrate on getting your activities working more efficiently today and you can devise some plan of action which will be prosperous. Tonight rest up and restore your energy for the coming week and thereby make much progress.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Make appointments early today for recreations which you enjoy and others would like to participate in. You are eager for romance with your mate, however, get the shopping done first and you will have more time later this evening.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Do whatever will make your life more harmonious today and get into some interesting recreational activities. Talk to your mate later this evening into living a more organized lifestyle so he or she will know where things are located.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Contact those who need your advice today and give it to them, thereby providing someone with helpful suggestions. Get your abode in tip-top shape for a guest and you can thereby make this person feel welcome and comfortable.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Plan how today to add to your present income and assets. Tonight study how to be more economical and build reserves for the days ahead and thereby you will have something for the lean times you could go through.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Be sure to state your true ambitions today to those who can assist you with some important new project. You can plan a workable course of action which need some assistance from an authority figure.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to Jan. 20) Elevate your consciousness today by starting your ideas working on a more practical level which will be successful if you take the necessary steps. See close friends this evening and you can have a relaxing time together.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Put a wise plan to work today which will quickly gain your finest desires. Don't confide your plans to anyone, as any leak of vital information could sabotage the entire project which could be costly in time and effort.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) If you keep the promises you have made today, you can assure greater success in the days ahead. Gain personal aims later this evening by consulting with some knowledgeable person and gain his or her advice on important matters.

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Minister blasts media over criticism of Jordan's performance in Atlanta

AMMAN (J.T.) — Youth Minister Mohammad Daoudiyeh has said the recent media uproar over the disqualification of a Jordanian athlete from the Atlanta Olympics and the failure of the Kingdom's delegation to win any medals was unjustified.

The minister in particular blasted Jordan Television's (JTV) coverage of the issue and said he "informed the prime minister and the minister of information (of JTV's coverage) and all those who helped in spreading fabrications and lies about our 'children' who went with us to Atlanta will be held responsible for their acts."

Blaming the Jordanian mass media for attacking Jordan's Olympic delegation and describing its performance as "disappointing," Mr. Daoudiyeh said the results were no surprise since Jordan did not qualify to any of the Olympic competitions and its participation was symbolic.

"I was surprised by some in the mass media attacking the delegation. Such coverage can be attributed to either ignorance or to some covert goals and indeed it is pathetic if it was due to ignorance," the minister said in an interview to be published by Al Aswaq Arabic daily today.

"Every one knows that I said in an interview with (JTV's) Sports Magazine

that we are going to Atlanta to prove our presence and because we cannot boycott the Atlanta Olympics," he said.

"I only assumed my post a short while ago and I am not responsible for winning gold or other medals... and long before our departure the record numbers of our players were known to all... It was apparent that our players were not qualified to achieve any advanced results.

The minister, who worked as a sports editor and writer as well as press advisor at the Royal Court before being elected as deputy and appointed as minister of youth, said he accepts objective and constructive criticism by the media and would in no way stand in the face of a free press.

But, he added, the issue seems to be about a conflict over the presidency of the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) now that the elections are nearing.

Dwelling on the issue of judo player Walid Awazem who was disqualified ahead of his first bout in the Olympics because of his failure to make the weigh-in, the minister said he was not responsible for accompanying Awazem to the weigh-in sight and showing him what to do.

Sports commentators and journalists in Amman said the case goes beyond the athlete's failure to make the

weigh-in, noting that Awazem was injured before his departure for Atlanta.

A routine medical check of Jordanian athletes in Atlanta's Olympic Village showed Awazem to be suffering from injury which had required medication and physiotherapy for four days prior to the competition.

In addition, it was revealed that a test run in Amman on the physical fitness of Awazem on July 7 showed that he needed to improve his fitness which was below average. Furthermore, Awazem's medical tests in Atlanta made it clear that the player had concealed a recent injury, sustained most probably during his training period in Syria prior to the delegation's departure for the Olympics.

Another puzzling point is the fact that Awazem had suggested to the Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) to name Khaled Rifai his coach while knowing that Mr. Rifai is not qualified for the job. He later revealed that he himself was Rifai's coach.

Mr. Daoudiyeh told Al Aswaq that Awazem's Japanese trainers signed papers showing that he was in good shape and it was only in Atlanta that Awazem revealed that he was injured.

He said there is thus far no medical report to prove that Awazem was injured, with the available reports asking

him to have further checks.

"When I asked him about his injury, he said he was afraid of being eliminated from the delegation... We can in no way find an excuse for the player and he should have participated although we know he would not have achieved a good result," said Mr. Daoudiyeh.

The minister refuted charges that the delegation included relatives of players, adding that some relatives accompanied the delegation on their own.

"Every Jordanian has the right to buy a plane ticket after obtaining the required visa to go to Atlanta. Omar (Dallal's) mother arrived in Atlanta from Canada to watch her son in the swimming competitions... and returned to Canada after the competition concluded," he said.

He added that swimmer Mira Ghneim's aunt also bought her own ticket to accompany 13-year-old Mira to Atlanta.

Mr. Daoudiyeh said he had an important meeting with International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Samaranch which will have its positive results on the Jordanian sports movement.

Mr. Samaranch said the IOC will help Jordan in preparing special programmes to train athletes and pledged to offer financial support to carry out these programmes.

Paralympic Games open in Atlanta

ATLANTA (AP) — Disabled athletes from 120 countries took centre stage Thursday night at Olympic Stadium, where thousands of fans still gripped by Olympic euphoria turned out for the opening ceremony of the 1996 Paralympics.

Less than two weeks after the Olympic flame was extinguished, the crowds came back to cheer on the 3,500 disabled athletes competing in Atlanta's second round of games.

"We're all feeling post-Olympic syndrome. This gives us a way to ease out of things a little bit," said Sue Anduze of Douglasville, Georgia, whose two teenage daughters were performing in the opening ceremony.

"Everybody went home and said, 'we're so glad the Olympics are over,' then they said, 'what are we going to do now?'" Anduze said.

Among the 64,500 spectators were Vice President Al Gore and Juan Antonio Samaranch, head of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

"On behalf of President (Bill) Clinton and a proud American nation eagerly awaiting the Paralympics to begin, I declare the 1996 Paralympic Games of Atlanta open," Mr. Gore said.

Perhaps the spectator most in need of a post-Olympic pick-me-up was Atlanta Olympics chief Billy Payne, who said the Paralympic celebration offered some relief after days spent saying goodbye to Olympic co-workers.

"It's good to come out here because the days are pretty said," Payne said. "With everybody leaving, it's tough. It's been much harder than I thought it would be."

Actor Christopher Reeve, paralysed in a horseback-riding accident in 1995, served as master of ceremonies. After a brief delay following his introduction, Reeve appeared on the stage from a rotating platform to introduce the parade of athletes.

"As we exit this stadium, consider their journeys and rejoice in their accomplishments," Reeve said. "They've arrived at a place in the world, the pinnacle of competition for world-class athletes with disabilities."

The athletes, preceded by the flag of their home country, then slowly processed around the track, where many will be whizzing in wheelchairs and running and jumping on prosthetic limbs during the next 10 days.

Like the Paralympic events, the ceremony downplayed participants' disabilities, focusing instead on their accomplishments. Soul singer Teddy Pender-



Actor Christopher Reeve, accompanied by his son Will, addresses the Paralympic Games athletes and fans Thursday during opening ceremony festivities in Atlanta before 10 days of athletic competition. A record breaking 117 countries will participate in the 10th Paralympic Games (Reuter photo)

grass, who uses a motorised wheelchair since a 1982 automobile accident left him partially paralysed, belted out "The Star Spangled Banner." Army Sgt. 1st Class Dana Bowman, who lost both legs in a skydiving accident in 1994, parachuted into a star formed by children on the field.

"Just as Dr. (Martin Luther) King taught us that the colour of one's skin should not determine one's destiny, so too will these athletes teach us that one's physical characteristics should not define or limit their life's potential," said Andy Flemming, Atlanta's Paralympic chief.

Other featured headliners tapped for the ceremony included Aretha Franklin, Carly Simon, Liza Minnelli and Hall and Oates.

The stars had to compete with a crush of local volunteers, including a choir of 5,000 Gospel singers that filled a stage, formed lines between delegations of athletes on the field and filled aisles in the stands.

Also on hand were 1,000 children's choir performers and hundreds of teens from school marching bands,

church choirs and dance studios throughout the Atlanta area.

"A lot of people just don't want this thing to be over," said Helen Dougherty, the ceremony director, who was overwhelmed by volunteers wanting to perform at the event.

The highlight of the ceremony was to be the relighting of the Olympic cauldron, which was extinguished when the Olympics ended Aug. 4. But the name of the person selected to light the cauldron remained a secret until the end.

This is the first time organisers have charged admission to the Paralympics, which run through Aug. 25 at venues used for the Olympics.

Still, the opening ceremony sold out by Wednesday, with tickets ranging from \$15 to \$100.

Regardless, fans continued to line up outside the stadium, trying to buy tickets, two hours before showtime. And, just as the fans returned, the scalpers were back to take their money.

"Everybody's coming up trying to get tickets, but we don't have any to give them.

But people all up and down the streets are selling tickets," said Jay Sellers of Conyers, a Paralympic volunteer who also worked during the Olympics.

Vendors whose Olympic dreams of staggering profits failed to pan out were also back, hawking leftover T-shirts, pins and other trinkets.

"A lot of them are trying to make their money back," said vendor Humphrey Smith of Atlanta, who was still trying to unload 300 of the 1,000 novelty Olympic medals he was stuck with after the games. "Me, personally, I'll be glad when it's over."

For the opening ceremony, co-producer Ken Chapman said he wanted to create a "people's ceremony," capturing the purity that some think the Olympics has lost.

Chapman recycled props and pieces of costumes from the Olympic ceremonies. In addition to the traditional parade of athletes, he planned a wheelchair ballet troupe. And one athlete, a paraplegic, zipped around the field on a jetlike hand cycle.

Williams makes Graf work to advance in Tennis classic

MANHATTAN BEACH, California (AP) — Venus Williams, playing her 14th career match, made world number one Steffi Graf work for a 6-4, 6-4 victory Wednesday in the third round of the WTA Tour women's tennis tournament here.

The 16-year-old Californian, cheered on by a crowd of 5,514 at the Manhattan Beach Country Club, showed remarkable poise as she broke Graf once in each set, and said she enjoyed every minute of the one hour and 21-minute match.

"I was loose," she said. "I was very prepared to play. Nothing in her game made me go 'whoa.'"

Graf, who claimed the 20th Grand Slam title of her career with her victory at Wimbledon this year, said she didn't think she played her best, but she admitted she was impressed with her young opponent.

"There were some amazing points that she played," Graf said. "She really goes for her shots, she has such incredible range, and she moves so well for someone so tall... She has tremendous possibilities."

Williams' self-confidence may be her highest asset. "I never, ever said to myself, 'oh no, I can't play here,'" she said. "I would never go on court and just say this person is a better player than I am."

Graf, herself known for her fearlessness in her days as a young giant-killer, said that attitude was just right.

"If you have fear when you're young, there's something wrong," Graf said. "That's how you should play when you're young because the older you get the tougher it will be."

Of her own game, Graf said she made too many easy mistakes. "I don't think I played

very well, but I played well enough on the important points," said Graf, who let one match point escape in the ninth game of the second set before serving out for the match with a love game.

Second-seeded German Anke Huber was also less than satisfied with her second-round victory over Kristie Boogert of the Netherlands.

Huber, runner-up to Monica Seles in the Australian Open final this year and winner of a tournament in Rosmalen, recovered from a first-set loss to win 5-7, 6-3, 6-3, but said she would have to improve to have a chance of meeting Graf in the final.

In the day's other third-round match, eighth-seeded Amy Frazier defeated Italian Silvia Farina 6-4, 6-0 to earn a quarterfinal clash with Graf.

Philippoussis downs Courier to reach quarters at New Haven

NEW HAVEN, Connecticut (AP) — Big-serving Mark Philippoussis won two tiebreakers to upset Jim Courier Thursday and reach the quarterfinals of the Pilot Pen International.

Philippoussis, seeded No. 14, beat the third-seeded Courier 7-6 (7-5), 7-6 (7-3).

Philippoussis, who rattles many opponents with his serve, said he has been working hard to improve his all-around game. "I'd like to think if my serve is not working, which in the past it hasn't, that I can rely on groundstrokes or coming into the net," he said. "I think I played smart today. I didn't go for too many stupid shots."

Top-seeded Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia advanced earlier in the day, defeating No. 15 Andrea Gaudenzi of Italy 6-1, 6-4.

No. 4 Wayne Ferreira of South Africa, No. 10 Jan Siemerink of the Netherlands, and No. 12 Daniel Vacek of the Czech Republic also reached the quarterfinals.

Wild-card Alex O'Brien beat fellow American Chuck Adams 6-3, 2-6, 6-2.

Trailing 4-2 in the second set, Courier broke Philippoussis in the seventh game and went on to force another tiebreaker.

"In the tiebreakers I served really well, and I think that was the key to winning it," Philippoussis said.

Sampras, Ivanisevic set dates with underdogs at ATP Championships

INDIANAPOLIS (R) — Top-seed Pete Sampras and second-seed Goran Ivanisevic won third-round matches Thursday to advance to quarterfinal dates against upset-minded underdogs at the \$1.04 million RCA Championships.

The top-ranked Sampras served poorly, but had an easy time anyway, posting a 6-1 6-2 win over 108th-ranked Marcos Ondruska of South Africa.

The seventh-ranked Ivanisevic of Croatia eased past 16th seed Petr Korda of Czech Republic 6-3 6-3.

Next up for Sampras and Ivanisevic are a pair of underhanded foes who have been springing surprises this week. Tommy Haas, an 18-year-old German wildcard recipient ranked 390 in the world, has reached the quarterfinals of the first tour event he's ever played and for his reward gets to meet world number one Sampras.

Haas, who spent the last five years at Nick Bollettieri Academy in Florida, defeated two seeded players this week, ousting eighth-seeded Renzo Furlan of Italy and 10th-seeded Australian Mark Woodford.

"All I want to do is go out there tomorrow and try my best," Haas said. "I don't really have any expectations to beat him (Sampras) or any-

thing." The 112th-ranked Roux upset sentimental favourite, ninth-seeded Stefan Edberg of Sweden, 6-3 6-4 in the third round, a day after ousting seventh-seeded Australian Jason Stoltenberg.

For a player known for his serving prowess, Sampras had an astonishingly low 39 per cent first serve percentage.

"I just didn't have it," Sampras said. "I didn't have my fast ball. Maybe my toss was moving all over the place. I was missing them, maybe trying to serve a little bit too hard."

Meanwhile Olympic gold medalist Andre Agassi, who was defeated from the \$1 million RCA Championships tournament Wednesday after a ball abuse incident and cursing at the umpire, was handed a \$6,000 fine Thursday.

In addition to the fine, the sixth-ranked Agassi will not receive any prize money for this week, which would have amounted to \$6,040 for a second-round showing.

Agassi also received zero ATP Tour points for the week, which will remain a part of his ranking for the next 52 weeks.

He will be unable to erase this no-point showing from the best-of-14 system in place on the tour.

Spinning World wins Prix Jacques Le Marois

DEAUVILLE, France (R) — Cash Assmussen, riding Irish 2,000 Guineas winner Spinning World, won his fourth Prix Du Haras De Fresnay-Le-Buffard Jacques Le Marois Thursday.

Spinning World held off a late charge by Vetheuil to win the one mile (1.6 kilometres) Group 1 race by half a length with Shaanxi a further three-quarters of a length third.

Spinning World was initially held up in fifth place behind Gothenberg, Le Triton, Sensation and Charnwood Forest, but grabbed the lead 150 yards out to record his second Group 1 victory.

"I had a good race as I followed through Le Triton and Charnwood

Forest. Once I pressed the button he really picked up for me and won easily," said Assmussen.

Spinning World registered the Niarchos family's sixth victory since 1987 in the race which they sponsor.

Meanwhile Zamindar, already as low as 8-1 favourite in some betting lists for the 1997 English 2,000 Guineas, gets another chance to test his lofty reputation in the Group 1 Prix Morny, run over six furlongs (1.2 kilometre) Sunday.

Zamindar is being mentioned in the same breath as his full brother, Zafonic, the outstanding European juvenile of 1992 and brilliant winner of the 1993 Guineas.

That may be something of a cross to bear at the

horse's connections, but what is not in doubt is that the Andre Fabre colt, a well grown individual with a lovely action, has shown exciting potential.

Fabre, who trained Zafonic for Zamindar's owner Khalid Abdullah, is not noted for pitching in at the deep end for nothing, and his protegee has done nothing wrong in his two starts to date.

After romping home on his debut, Zamindar then dominated throughout in the Group 3 Prix De Cabourg. This is the logical next step up for the undoubted favourite.

The only other home contender is the Crique head filly, Pas De Reponse, who created a good impression when taking the Prix Yacowlef on her debut. She is

reported to be one of the stable's best juveniles.

British raiders are an integral part of Deauville and they account for three of the five runners in the big juvenile test. They are Bahamian Bounty, Rich Ground and Blue Ridge.

David Loder's Bahamian Bounty is very well thought off and trotted up at Yarmouth last month after a promising newmarket debut.

Rich Ground gave trainer James Bethell a first group race success when creating a 40-1 upset in the July stakes last month. The grey showed useful speed and could be open to further improvement.

<p>TODAY AT</p>	<p>CINEMA TEL: 634144</p> <p>PHILADELPHIA</p> <p>Clueless</p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30</p>	<p>CINEMA TEL: 668239</p> <p>PLAZA</p> <p>Laila Alawi & Singer Mohammad Fued in Traffic Lights (Arabic)</p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30</p> <p>Toy Story</p> <p>5:00 p.m</p>	<p>CINEMA TEL: 677420</p> <p>CONCORD</p> <p>CONCORD "1"</p> <p>Julia Roberts...in Something to Talk About</p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30</p> <p>Ace Ventura "2"</p> <p>Show: 5:15</p> <p>CONCORD "2"</p> <p>SEVEN</p> <p>Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30</p>	<p>Ramoun Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274 - 618275</p> <p>Today presents Zawad Weld Awad theatre group in the play entitled Five-Star Government</p> <p>Starring comedians: Mahmoud Salmeh & Hussein Tubeishat</p> <p>play starts 8:30 p.m</p>	<p>Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155</p> <p>PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights</p> <p>At 8:30 p.m.</p> <p>For reservation please call 625155-640155</p>
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Sports

Museeuw seeks to bounce back in Leeds Classic

LONDON (R) — Johan Museeuw seeks to strengthen his grip on cycling's World Cup Sunday after a setback in San Sebastian last week.

The Belgian Cup-holder failed to score points in Spain and starts the seventh round, the Leeds Classic, with a vulnerable lead of 24 points.

Although Italian Stefano Zanini is not racing in Leeds, Museeuw is still under pressure in this 232-kilometre race.

Another pointless race, and victory for Ukrainian Alex Gontchenkov or Italian Fabio Baldato, and the Belgian could face a protracted battle to wrap up a second World Cup before the 11th and final race in Japan.

That is still 10 weeks away, and after a season which opened in February, Museeuw is looking for another big win to add to his triumph in the Paris-Roubaix, April's Classic over the cobbles.

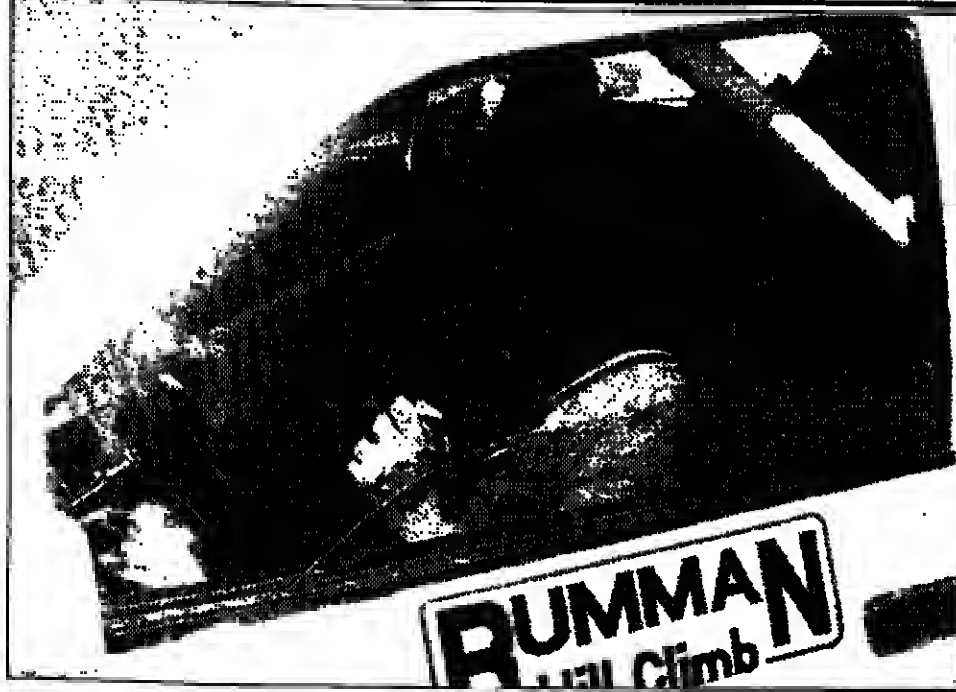
He has been in the top two placings for the last three World Cup series, and after missing out in the Olympic road race, his other 1996 target, Museeuw is out to ensure that the cup does not slip away.

Tour de France winner, Bjarne Riis, of Denmark, is in the line-up of 16 teams but is not a contender for the cup series.

Last year's winner, Anglo-Italian Max Sciandri, bronze medalist in the Olympic road race, and the Danish silver medal-winner Rolf Sorensen, are more likely to score over the tough route through Yorkshire.

Although the cup series is restricted to the top 25 teams, the world governing body has given a dispensation for a British team to start.

Apart from Sciandri, Britain have their Olympic bronze medalist Chris Boardman in the field, but his current focus is on the world track championships in Manchester from Aug. 28.



His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah prepares to drive his car at the Tall Al Rumman tournament (Photo by Hatem Ali)

UEFA increases Champions' League from 16 to 24 teams

GENEVA (R) — The Champions' League will increase from 16 to 24 teams from the 1997-98 season, European soccer's governing body decided Thursday.

UEFA, who dumped champions from smaller nations out of the European Cup two years ago, said the decision to change the format means that all domestic champions will have a chance to qualify for the Champions' League.

It said Europe's top-eight ranked countries would also be able to enter a second team for the qualifying phase.

The current top nations who stand to benefit by having a second team in the competition are Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, England, France, Germany, Portugal and Belgium, although the list could vary slightly by the start of the 1997-98 season.

A UEFA working group proposed the idea of expanding the competition in May. The expanded format means a flurry of matches over the European summer

with the preliminary round, involving champions from 32 countries, being played in July.

The 16 winners then play a qualifying round in August with eight of the remaining national champions plus eight additional high-placed teams.

The winning 16 teams would then join the eight remaining champions in a Champions' League made up of four groups of six.

The Champions' League began with just eight clubs in the 1992-93 season.

China's Olympics chief slams Atlanta games

BEIJING (AFP) — The head of China's Olympic Committee has slammed the choice of Atlanta for the Centennial Games and urged the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to be careful in the future, China Sports magazine said Friday.

"The IOC chose Atlanta, thinking that the United States' material civilization and the Americans' business are more important than traditions," said Wei Jizhong, secretary general of the Chinese Olympic Committee.

"The outcome of the Atlanta Olympics proves it is risky to assign the Olympics to a few businessmen who, relying on their experience in trade, regard the organisation as a mere commercial activity," he added.

China was a vocal critic of the Atlanta games, and complained bitterly at lack of hospitality, racism and jealousy from U.S. organisers, journalists and crowds.

Urging the IOC to draw a lesson from the 1996 games, Mr. Wei said the

Atlanta organisers had neglected the athletes' interests and made promises it could not keep.

"The celebrations of the Centennial Olympic Games should have been held in its birthplace, Greece," he added.

China is still smarting from its failed bid to win the 2000 Olympics, which went to Sydney.

It continues to blame the United States for lobbying IOC members not to vote for their bid.

King smashes own record at Rumman Hill Climb

By Roufan Nahhas and Munem Fakhoury
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein broke the two-minute barrier in the country's most popular auto sport event, the Rumman Hill Climb, by clocking 1:57.28 minutes Friday.

Sheikh Jaber Al Khalifeh from Bahrain took the second place with 1:58.08 minutes, Lebanon's Nabil Karam came third with 1:59.34 minutes.

Sixty-six competitors tried to break the two-minute barrier set by His Majesty King Hussein in 1989 in his Mercedes 190 with a time of 2 minutes 42 seconds.

The three-kilometre-long event witnessed the participation of His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah who came fourth with 2:02.97 minutes.

The race was attended by Her Majesty Queen Noor. Their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal, Prince Ali and other members of the Royal Family, as well as thousands of sport loving spectators who filled the



His Majesty King Hussein enters his car during the Rumman Hill Climb tournament Friday (Photo by Hatem Ali)

area and watched their King break his own record in this one-day event.

The Rumman Hill Climb took place 17-kilometre north of Amman just off the Jarash Highway, two kilometres north of Rumman village and the results are entered in the Jordan Drivers Open Championship.

Unfortunately Jordanian drivers were unsuccessful in taking prominent positions as the fifth place went to Rougeh Faghali from Lebanon with 2:07.17 minutes and Raed Abed Jawad from Saudi Arabia came sixth with 2:09.64 minutes.

After the race King Hussein spoke to the press and expressed his gratitude to the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ) for the well-organised event.

Receiving the top prize for the King during the prize-giving ceremony was Prince Abdullah. Prince Faisal presented the trophies at the RACJ premises in Amman.

United kick off with trip to the awkward squad

LONDON (R) — Manchester United, who sent shock waves through the Premier League last weekend by routing big-spending rivals Newcastle 4-0, start the defence of the league title Saturday with a tricky visit to Wimbledon.

United were superb in the Charity Shield at Wembley Sunday, brushing aside Kevin Keegan's talent-laden team with chilling ease to reestablish themselves as favourites for their 11th championship success and their fourth in five years.

Frenchman Eric Cantona, captaining the side this year, was unstoppable, and "the Ferguson babes" — United's cluster of exciting young home-grown players — seem destined to improve with age over the next couple of seasons.

Manager Alex Ferguson has brought Czech Karel Poborsky and Dutch forward Jordi Cruyff into his multi-national set-up, and Danish goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel looks as formidable as ever.

In short, all is sweetness and light at Old Trafford. But if any team can unsettle last season's league and cup double winners, Wimbledon can.

Now celebrating a decade in the top flight against all the odds, the south Londoners have a knack of bringing the high and mighty down to Earth with their uncompromising style of play.

"I can't wait to get my first tackle in on Mr. Cantona," Wimbledon defender Chris Perry said this week. "Then we'll really know we are off and running again."

But Wimbledon struggled last season, finally finishing 14th after flirting with relegation, and United, with out-of-favour striker Andy Cole their only absentee, should take three points.

Ferguson's men will also take comfort from last season's visit to Selhurst Park, where they won an enthralling clash 4-2 thanks to two late strikes from Cantona.

Newcastle, who made partial amends for Sunday's Wembley disaster with a 2-1 midweek defeat of Belgian side Anderlecht, start their bid for a much-yearned-for league title at Everton.

The Tynesiders, deprived last season of their first major trophy since 1969 and their first championship success since 1927, have £15-million (\$23.2 million) man Alan Shearer in their ranks and are sure to push United right through until May.

Shearer was subdued against United's rock-solid defence, but his first league goal for his new club should not be long in coming.

The man trying to stop him Saturday is veteran Welsh goalkeeper Neville Southall, making his 700th appearance for Joe Royle's side.

Everton's city rivals Liverpool are the only other side who looked capable of tugging the league trophy away from United or Newcastle last year, and are again tipped for trophies.

They travel to Middlesbrough for arguably the match of the day, with Czech midfielder Patrick Berger expected to make his debut for the Merseysiders against former Juventus striker Fabrizio Ravanelli and Brazilians Branco and Emerson.

Middlesbrough's third Brazilian Juninho returned from the Atlanta Olympics with a knee ligament injury and may not start. At the other end of the

country, Ravanelli's compatriots Gianluca Vialli and Roberto Di Matteo will line up for Chelsea at Southampton, in a match which throws up an intriguing clash of coaching styles.

Dutchman Ruud Gullit, an eloquent advocate of "the beautiful game," pits his side against a team managed by fiery Scotsman Graeme Souness, who in his Liverpool days in the 1980s was one of the most feared midfielders in the business.

In the capital, manager-less Arsenal hope to put a turbulent week behind them when they host neighbours West Ham.

The 1989 and 1991 champions sacked Bruce Rioch Monday and will not name his replacement — widely expected to be former Monaco coach Arsene Wenger — until at least next Tuesday.

London's other title-outside Tottenham travel to 1995 champions Blackburn, who could mount a challenge again if they spend the fortune they earned from the Shearer deal wisely.

Race for 2004 Olympics takes another step forward

CAPE TOWN (R) — Cape Town's hopes of becoming the first African city to host the Olympic Games take a step forward Thursday as formal bid documents are presented to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Lausanne.

Cape Town is bidding against 10 other cities for the 2004 games — Buenos Aires, Istanbul, Lille, Rio De Janeiro, Athens, San Juan, Seville, Stockholm, Rome and St Petersburg.

The next stage is the IOC Evaluation Commission in December.

A short list of four or five will be announced in March or April next year and the winner in September.

Cape Town is in the throes of a violent vigilante anti-drugs and gangsters campaign, local taxi wars and municipal strikes, but Robbie Stewart, a director of the bid company, is not deterred by the adverse publicity.

He told Reuters: "We don't want to get involved in the specific issues or discuss

Vigilante groups. It is, we believe, a policing problem — they just do not have enough resources. We support any move to allocate more resources to the police."

Stewart added: "We are happy with the bid books — it is a great document with superb illustrations. We believe we have a strong bid."

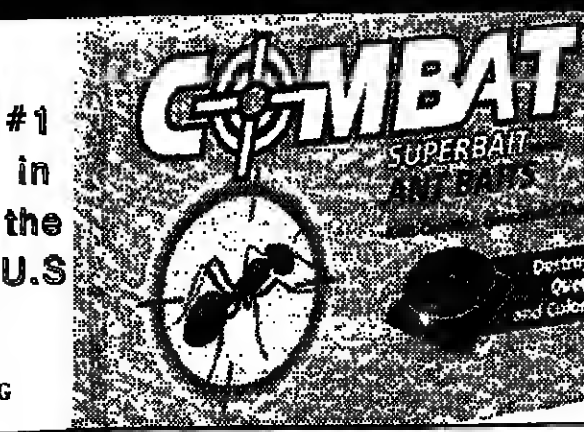
The bid has had to endure many delays before the national government agreed in June to underwrite it and contribute towards the 7.5

billion rand (\$1.6 billion) capital budget.

Detractors say rates will increase and the money would be better spent on housing and basic facilities for the city slums.

The bid company says hosting the Olympics will not use money allocated for housing and basic needs and that a successful bid will inject 30 billion rand (\$6.6 billion) into the economy between 1997 and 2006 and could generate over 90,000 jobs.

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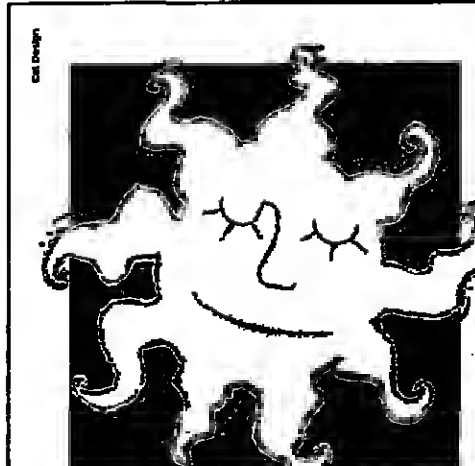
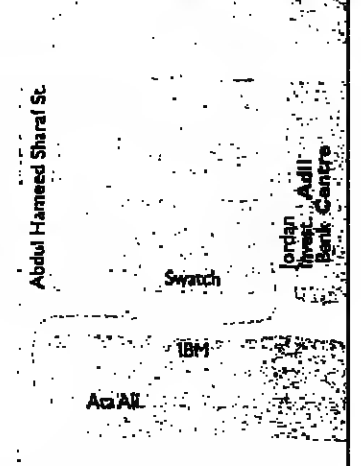


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